French Engravings of the
Eighteenth Century

Drouais — Krantzinger

One hundred and twenty copies have been printed for private circulation only.

No.

French Engravings
of the Eighteenth Century
In the Collection of
Joseph Widener, Lynnewood Hall

L'adroite et intelligente gravure du XVIIIme Siècle—si plaisante en son fini—donnait la ligne, le modelage, le corps à de courantes indications de scènes, de vagues bistres, à des ébauches, des rêves, des nuages. . . .—GONCOURT.

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FRANÇOIS HUBERT DROUAIS

107.

MADAME DU BARRY

Engraved by JACQUES FIRMIN BEAUVARLET

First state.

ONE of the most desirable and fascinating specimens of French iconography: the *chef-d'œuvre* of Beauvarlet, whose praises are mingled with far-fetched blame in the memoirs of Bachaumont: "For the sake of over-finish, but to the "detriment of character, the signal skill of a soft and unctuous burin brought about "the fashion of tampering with a painter's drawing, so that of the original only the "outward qualities remain." Apparently Bachaumont[1] had never looked at this print. Madame Vigée Lebrun, to whom du Barry had given many sittings, wrote of it: "A masterly interpretation of the extreme simplicity—a feat in itself—of "Drouais's most successful presentment of the King's mistress in a riding habit."

F. H. DROUAIS (1727-1775), the son of a miniaturist, the pupil of Boucher and Vanloo, proved to be in art the victim of his belief that by means of decorative fittings and arbitrary backgrounds he could raise his portraits to the level of great pictures. For the sake of flattering his noble sitters, who preferred prettiness and charm to accurate resemblance, he adopted a mannered drawing-room style, and became the rage at Versailles. Diderot did not like him: "With the exception of "truth and originality, of strength and depth of physiognomy, there is a little of "everything in the portraits by Drouais. His draperies are a perfect make-believe, "and what between the flash of youth, the glamour of rank, the studied refinement "of attire and a liberal coat of rouge, some of his ladies at first sight are almost "attractive. But on closer inspection they might all be wearing masks of the best "chamois leather: their flesh tints without transparency or any attempt at toning "down are made of the most precious vermilion and the finest chalk in the world; "in fact, that is how they look at a distance when driving on the bulwarks. Not one "of them is ugly, until at home in the morning you may have an opportunity to "discover their real features."

The "Boy fondling a Cat" in the André-Jacquemart collection, is the prototype of Drouais's pretty portraits, where fancy and grace are substitutes for reality.

Marie Jeanne Vaubernier (1746-1793), who began life as a milliner's apprentice and married du Barry, an adventurer, succeeded the Marquise de Pompadour in the King's favour, without the intelligence and spirit of intrigue of her immediate predecessor. Her manners, as unassuming and gracious as those of a Fragonard shepherdess, neither bore out her motto: "boutez en avant"—push on—nor the mischievous political rôle attributed to her by contemporaries who scorned her origin. Banished to Pont aux Dames at the death of Louis XV, she was suffered, thanks to the mediation of Queen Marie Antoinette, to reside once more at the exquisite Pavilion of Louvecienne built for her by Le Doulx,[2] where, fifteen years or so later, the Revolution charged her with having squandered the public treasury in decorative panels, rose china, and ormolu mountings. Devotion to the royal family ennobled her end. She managed to send Louis XVI a considerable sum, "which was his," she wrote, "not hers," and went to England in 1792 to endeavour to raise money on her jewels and help the Queen.[3] On her return she was tried and beheaded "for having worn mourning for the tyrant and conspired against the Republic." Though she had outlived her lovers and her gaiety, her coquetry remained. With a touch of feminine vanity she told the judges "I am only forty-"two." It was scarcely an under-statement, for women like du Barry do not grow old; they remain to posterity as some lover or admirer painted them.

According to the memoirs of the time, the best likeness of this butterfly on the wheel was due to Drouais, once limner-in-ordinary to Pompadour. By reproducing with the burin that limpid picture, Beauvarlet perpetuated for posterity the refined features of the last of all royal mistresses in history: the delicate neck doomed to the guillotine, the blinking eyes of blue soon to be widened by terror, the subtle smile which summed up on an enticing countenance the science of love-making and the melancholy of living it out. How can one help being moved to pity before the crying contrast of a life of pleasure within regal surroundings and the supreme entreaty of this wretched woman, foolishly human: "You won't hurt me, will you, Mr. Executioner."[4]

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The original picture, larger than the print, is said to be in the collection at Wrotham Place in Kent.

Contrary to the general rule, lettered impressions of this portrait are the rarest.

[1] Louis Petit de BACHAUMONT (1690-1771), a *littérateur*, brought up at the court of Versailles, spent his life in the Salon of Mme. Doublet, who kept a register of artistic and political gossips with a special reference to books suppressed by the Censor. The name of Bachaumont is connected with the first volume of this Journal, published anonymously between 1777 and 1779 as "Secret Memoirs for the History of the Republic of Letters from the 1st of January 1762," but his exact share in the authorship is a matter of controversy. Continued by Pidansot de Mairobert, the work extended over thirty-six volumes. La Harpe, who had been sharply handled by the friends of Mme. Doublet, refers to it as "a crude compilation, a "heap of absurdities and scandal picked up in the gutter where the worthiest characters are slandered by low

MADAME DU BARRY

By J. F. Beauvarlet. After F. H. Drouais

"impudent wits." Whatever may be the value of such a unique source for the annals of prohibited literature, the fact is that its criticisms are neither judicious nor in good taste.

Although Bachaumont never held any official position, he was looked upon for years as a sort of *arbiter elegantiarum* on art matters. His servility to the Patriarch of Ferney, whom he could only imitate successfully in the shape of his peruke, won him the nickname of the periwigged head of Mr. de Voltaire.

[2] To form an idea of its splendid decoration and appointments see at the Louvre (room of eighteenth century drawings) that masterpiece of distinguished feasting by Moreau le Jeune—not engraved—"A Supper Party at Louveciennes."

It was a merciful thing for art that Mme. du Barry never paid for the "Roman d'amour de la jeunesse," four panels she had committed to Fragonard, and that the painter was able to remove them in time to Grasse, or they would have perished at the sack of Louveciennes. Their subsequent and recent progress from Grasse, *via* London, to New York, is well known: not so the risk they incurred thirty years or so ago of becoming a decorative fixture at the Casino of Monte Carlo. By haggling over a demand of £12,000, that conservative administration spared them another irreparable fall.

[3] A remarkable document of Christie's archives is the catalogue of Madame du Barry's sale. Copies of it were produced before the revolutionary Tribunal, when the mispronounced name of the English auctioneers elicited the most profane jests from a low, ignorant mob.

[4] In England, two of her portraits were engraved at the time. One in mezzotint, labelled "du Barré" by Watson, after a spurious Drouais, has a ghostly look not unlike the wax-works of Curtius, uncle and forerunner of Madame Tussaud; the other an exquisite interpretation by Condé of perhaps the finest miniature by Cosway, now in the J. P. Morgan collection. Red corals round the lady's throat suggest the fateful gash: languishing eyes through half-closed lids prompt the ungallant rebuke of Louis XV: "Shall "we ever see the Countess awake?" It cannot be denied that the countenance of this Queen of midinettes did not lack a certain distinction.

108.

MADAME DU BARRY

Engraved and printed in colours by Jean Baptiste André Gautier Dagoty

First state.

Le Blon (1670-1741), the precursor of trichromatics and a member of the great family of unfortunate inventors, applied himself to reproduce on a print all the colours and shades of a picture by the superimposition of a blue, a red, and a yellow plate, having recourse eventually to a black one on which the whole modelling was done so as to expedite the work. By using the other three plates much as a painter would use his glazings he saved time, but did not overcome public indifference and died in hospital.

His pupil, Jacques Gautier Dagoty (1710-1785), in turn physician, anatomist, engraver, got hold of the invention and claimed to have had the first idea of adding to the monochrome copperplates a black one which supplied the complete design, gave depth to the facsimile, set off all the details, and softened the hard line between one colour and another. In the words of Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold: "without "such a contrivance and boast, this Marseillais, more of a charlatan than an artist, "whose mezzotints were below the average, could have achieved no success."

"I begin," he wrote to a member of the Academy in 1753, "by putting under "the press the first plate, which leaves on the paper a kind of wash drawing, and is "replaced by a blue plate which, combined with it, produces a sort of *camaïeu* or the "blending of the various degrees of black and blue, ranging from grey, bluish grey, "and dull blue to a quantity of other shades partaking of them. Then I take up "the yellow plate which together with the foregoing colours gives light green, sea-"green, olive-green, as well as brown and dull yellow, besides bright yellow. Next "comes the turn of my red plate to supply not only red, but with the help of the "other three also purple, orange, flaxy grey, pink, brown-red, umber, Cologne earth, "and no end of hues never before obtained with the primary colours."

As a matter of fact, the results achieved by Dagoty senior hardly responded to his promises. His theory clashed with the practical difficulties foreseen by Cochin, especially with that of securing pigments sufficiently transparent to yield the complete gamut of tints so confidently enumerated. "If only," Vuaflart and Herold go on to say, "he had been satisfied to get a living out of his would-be discovery.

"What makes the man odious is that he palmed it off with the help of "apparently scientific speculations as emphatical as far fetched. Nobody took in "earnest his gloomy and sallow prints."

Nevertheless, the six sons of Dagoty, trained by him every one of them, adhered to the same process. Jean Baptiste (17 . .?-1786), the cleverest of the family, combined with it a fifth plate whereby the thick laying on of colours—*impasto*—was effectively imitated. "This is," writes Mr. Courboin, "the famous white of copperplate "engraving, introduced in the portrait of du Barry, which more than one eighteenth-"century craftsman alleged to have invented, but which had been used as far back "as the fifteenth century by E. S. the Master of 1466."

The print before us marks a slight divergency between the father's method and that of Jean Baptiste. Its first state—a signal rarity—was apparently decisive in that respect; for the second, not so unfrequently met with, shows the addition of a white plate, though the greyness inherent to all the engravings by the Dagotys is hardly relieved by it. Some alterations are also noticeable on the dressing-table introduced in the composition as well as on the tray held by the page.

Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold, so hard on old Dagoty, but inclined to relent in favour of his sons, Jean Baptiste, Arnaud, Raphaël, Honoré, Fabien, and Edouard, make no distinction among them, merely admitting that "their works are worth "remembering not merely on account of the graphic problem connected with them "and of their rarity, but also because they convey the realistic likenesses of such "great personages as Louis XV, Choiseul, du Barry, Marie Antoinette." The restriction, or rather the favourable admission, should be limited to Jean Baptiste, the real Dagoty of the entire family from a collector's point of view. Next, but not on the same level, came Edouard (1745-1783), who engraved twelve pictures of the Orleans Gallery.

By crediting Jean Baptiste André with an artistic sense not quite so debased as that of the other members of the family, Delteil passes upon him what he considers a temperate judgement: "rather useful as documents, but devoid of "spirit and skill, the portraits due to him hardly deserve the fuss made about "them. What could be more flatly drawn, more awkwardly contrived, and more "miserably modelled than the du Barry group?"

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The original picture by Drouais interpreted on this print has not been identified. According to de Goncourt a version of it at Versailles is by some contemporary copyist. The last Bacchante of the monarchy, the Aspasia of a French Sardanapalus, as she was described in the absurd language of the revolutionary Tribunal, is represented wearing a combing wrapper, leaning on the toilet table and stirring with a small spoon a cup of coffee. The features are not quite so nymph-like as on another portrait, masterfully engraved by Beauvarlet (No. 107) after the same painter: there lurks no roguishness in the eyes, the nose is not tip-tilted and lacks sauciness.

It is the likeness of a du Barry just risen from bed, whose hair is undone, whose beauty *en deshabillé* has yet to be attended to.[1]

The Negro boy introduced in the picture is no negligible figure. A native of Bengal, brought over to France by a sea-captain in 1771 when about ten years of age, and attached as a sort of ornamental menial to the household of the favourite, he enjoyed exceptional opportunities to pick the pocket of Louis XV who, as a joke but with a salary of 600 livres, appointed him Governor of Louveciennes, the residence of Madame du Barry.[2] Not inappropriately, as shown by events, the Prince de Conti nicknamed him Zamore after a murderous exotic character in the "Alzire" of Voltaire. Anxious, when the Revolution broke out, to earn the freedom of Santo Domingo, the richest plantation colony in the West Indies, and forgetting how amply he had been remunerated since boyhood for preparing his mistress's coffee and carrying both her parasol and her train, he denounced her to the vengeance of the people, and actually disclosed the hiding-places of her treasures. Goncourt quotes his evidence before Fouquier, Public Prosecutor, and twelve jurymen in December 1793, when "the former courtesan, indicted as an agent of "the infamous Pitt, and an accomplice in the counter-revolution, the uprising of "the Cälvados, the Vendean insurrection, the troubles in the South," was sentenced to death. Zamore swore he had urged her to give up a portion of her fortune to the nation: "she refused, kept up her confabulations with aristocrats, and knowing "I saw a good deal of Grieve, an old friend of Franklin, Marat, and other patriots, "ordered me out of the house at three days' notice." To which du Barry replied she had no advice to receive from him, and that certainly she turned him out, because he kept bad company. No amount of delations, however, could shelter this tragic buffoon from the suspicion of the *sansculottes*, who shortly afterwards discovered his own hoard, and threw him into prison. He died at fifty-nine, in the meanest hovel of Rue Perdue, near the Place Maubert.

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Barely twenty years before Marie Antoinette, the dauphiness, had remarked in a letter to her mother: "This woman positively reigns. As it rains while I "write, I wonder if it be with her permission."

[1] A small plaster bust by Caffieri, now at the Library at Versailles, is considered the best likeness of Madame du Barry, more so than the marble by Pajou at the Louvre, vulgarized by too many copies, and giving her a sheepish Bourbon type.

[2] The story circulated at the time that Madame du Barry had rewarded with a St. Louis Cross the naval commissary who brought over for her both the Negro boy and a wonderful emerald parrot, which Drouais has forgotten to introduce into this group. Portail did a sketch of Zamore, once in the Goncourt collection: large white eyes, a flat nose, lips like a ripe pomegranate, black curls escaping at the temples and neck from a gorgeous head-dress crested with red and white plumes, pearl drops hanging from the ears, a fine ebony hand emerging from a wealth of lace at the sleeves. A wide vest, a variegated coat, a beautiful frill.

In the famous drawing dated 1771, "Un Souper à Louveciennes," by Moreau le Jeune, at the Louvre, Zamore may be recognized wearing his feathered turban, a rose garment, pink breeches.

109.

LE COMTE D'ARTOIS ET SA SŒUR

Engraved by Jacques Firmin Beauvarlet

Third state.

CHARLES PHILIPPE, Count of ARTOIS (1757-1836), brother to Louis XVI, joined the French army at the siege of Gibraltar in 1772, without any taste for a military career. At sixteen he married Marie Thérèse of Savoy. Always unpopular because of his dissipation and frivolity, having incurred by various means a debt of 56,000,000 francs to be borne by the impoverished state, and being looked upon as the chief of the reactionary party at Court, he left France in 1789 for a safer atmosphere, under the pretence of furthering the Royalist cause abroad. He returned to Paris in 1814 in the wake of the Allies, and ten years afterwards, at the death of Louis XVIII, he ascended the throne as Charles X, being crowned with all the splendour of the old *régime*. But like most of his friends he had neither forgotten nor learnt anything, and his enactments against the freedom of the press, the introduction of a new mode of election, the grant of an enormous indemnity to the *émigrés*, brought on the Revolution of 1830 and compelled him to abdicate and return to England.

His sister, Mme. Clotilde (1759-1802), was a saintly woman, married to Carl Emmanuel IV, King of Sardinia, whom Napoleon I deprived of Piedmont and Savoy in 1800, until the Congress of Vienna restored to him his former territories.

The original picture, in one of the eighteenth-century furniture rooms at the Louvre, is surrounded by objects and tapestries which set off its decorative character. There is an indifferent miniature of it in the André-Jacquemart Museum.

Portalis and Beraldi have much to say about the print: "Beauvarlet has "reproduced the group by Drouais and has put into it a precious finish. With "uncalled-for severity Duplessis regrets that the artist has not given to the con- "struction of the figures some of the attention devoted to the symmetrical "juxtaposition of the initial incisions on his plate, even though the first view of it "may be pleasing. The truth is, this celebrated engraving, known as 'les Enfants "de France' has been wrought in such a clear and masterly manner, that one need "not regret that all engravers cannot be Drevets.[1] Their respective processes are "bound to differ and the very tricks of talented artists, the occasional liberties

"taken with their work, strike a personal note and add to the variety and interest "of a collection."

Again, in a separate notice on Beauvarlet, Portalis wrote: "The fine drawing "and modelling on the clever and brilliant print of Count d'Artois as a boy leading "Mme. Clotilde on a goat have been deliberately overlooked by an otherwise "responsible critic who tried to make out that Beauvarlet's only care was to display "his jugglery with the burin. Is this insinuation suggested by the admirable ren- "dering of the lace worn by the little Princess? Once an artist has acquired a style "of his own, why should he hide it, and does not the mastery over his tools form "an integral feature of his talent?"

The same composition was reproduced in mezzotints by J. J. Haïd in Germany.

[1] DREVET, Father and Son (1664-1738, 1697-1739), are quoted as portrait engravers whose technique differed entirely from that of Beauvarlet. It was said of the latter that he chased his copperplates and forgot to merge all minute details into the ensemble of his work, as shown to a certain extent on this print.

JEAN DEMOSTHÈNE DUGOURE

110.

ROXELANE

Engraved by Pierre Adrien Le Beau

AMONG many indifferent pictures by DUGOURE (1749-1810), whose self-confidence bordered on temerity when he painted "Le Lever de la mariée" to match Baudouin's "Couché de la mariée" (No. 9), this portrait comes as a redeeming feature. Judging by other likenesses of Mlle. Raucourt (1756-1815), there seems to be no doubt that the actress sat for it when at the height of success in Racine's tragedy of "Bajazet." The part of Roxana, the Sultana as unfaithful as Phædra, scorned like her by the man she loves but unlike her untroubled by remorse, suited the temperament and type of beauty, the expressive gesture and perfect elocution of Brizard's best pupil, who at sixteen had taken theatre-goers by storm, and already at twenty had to disappear from the Comédie Française on account of slander and debts. With the influence of Voltaire, who sent for her at Ferney and under the protection of Queen Marie Antoinette, she returned to the stage in 1779 and made a great hit as Cleopatra. Imprisoned during the Revolution because of her bold adherence to Royalism, she received a pension from Bonaparte and was placed at the head of a company of actors whose performances in Italy were meant to arouse admiration for French talent and literature.

The inappropriate pairing of this print with Baudouin's "Sa taille est ravissante" (No. 19) is accounted for by the respective shape and borders, as well as by the fact that both were engraved by Le Beau.

JEAN DUPLESSIS-BERTAUX

III, II2.

LE CHARLATAN FRANÇAIS—LE CHARLATAN ALLEMAND

A pair engraved by Isidore Stanislas Helman in 1777

First states.

DUPLESSIS-BERTAUX (1747-1818) studied painting under Vien, engraving under Lebas from 1778 to 1781, and contributed to St. Non's "Voyage pittoresque." His peculiar compositions, with groups of tiny people scattered on large spaces, procured him the commission to illustrate one of the prettiest books of the time, "Les petits Conteurs"—little Story-tellers—including La Fontaine, into which his adroit and witty point introduced many amusing microscopic pictures. Having become a staunch Revolutionist, he published a series of contemporary scenes theatrically conceived, and enlivened or rather spoilt by curiously emaciated figures, but historically valuable, thanks to the accuracy of the local details. There can be no doubt that, without plagiarism, he fashioned his style after the famous set of "Woes and miseries of warfare," thus earning the name of the modern Callot, because of the resemblance between his own beggars and the *Gueux* of 150 years before.

The survival of Duplessis's name is principally due to the graphic information on military equipment conveyed by a mass of drawings he brought back after following the Republican and Imperial armies in most of their campaigns. Otherwise he could not be regarded as an original artist, except for the minor circumstance that instead of employing professional models he depended exclusively upon genuine soldiers for sitters. His skill as an engraver is evidenced on a few plates where he gave full value to the portion of the work first tackled, leaving all the rest a blank.

Bourcard does not seem to attach great importance to this pair of "Charlatans." On the other hand, Portalis and Beraldi consider both prints "very pretty," and commend the fine relief given to them by Helman. The Colonnade of the Louvre forms the background of the rostrum from which two French cheap-jacks dispense drugs and elixirs. Their customers are not quite so suburban as is the crowd gathered in front of a barber's shop round the German mountebank on horseback,

who produces his phials out of the pouch of his saddle. Both prints are dedicated to the painter Guéret.

The original pen and indian ink wash drawings turned up between 1889 and 1899 at the consecutive sales of three collections, the Decloux and Mühlbacher among them, and attracted competition, for the military element introduced in both scenes shows Duplessis-Bertaux at his best.

CHARLES DOMINIQUE JOSEPH EISEN
(1720-1778)

IS he the foremost of all vignettists?[1] Some collectors, enamoured of his delicate and crisp drawings, are inclined to think so; yet, as it cannot be denied that Moreau is a more serious and a more complete artist, that Cochin has more breadth and science, EISEN should be given the third place, almost on a par with Gravelot.

Trained by his father, a fairly good painter of the naturalistic Flemish school, he was already an accurate and an inventive draughtsman when in Paris he joined that international boarding-house of engravers, the studio of Lebas. Having made his mark with some fine cuts for Voltaire's "Henriade," though his leaning was in no way towards epic subjects, and being forced by an ill-assorted marriage to adopt the readiest means of making money, he launched out as the meddlesome child of art applied to a semblance of industry. To that groping phase of his career is due a complete manual of scroll ornaments for the benefit of bronze and wood carvers, jewellers, silversmiths, tailors, and candlestick makers, all exponents and practitioners of the *Rocaille*.[2] From fountains and marble vases to snuff-boxes and cruet stands, from bits of architecture, contorted caryatids and scalloped niches to scent burners and clocks, from military uniforms to liveries, Eisen sketched every conceivable decorative article and object according to the spiral and asymmetric lines of the Louis XV style.

His success was first due to two small compositions, "Spring" and "Autumn," washed with indian ink, commissioned in 1752 by that channel of all favours, Madame de Pompadour, who engraved them, or pretended to do so. As a consequence she asked Eisen to give her two lessons a week at a yearly salary of 7,500 livres, and although his unrestrained habits stood in the way of his admission to the Academy, she had him appointed drawing master to the king's light horsemen and pages.

From that moment editors monopolized him. Frontispieces, tail-pieces, *fleurons*, and borders became his speciality, leading him to undertake a series of illustrations

for the tales of La Fontaine[3] and the "Baisers" of Dorat. In both these works, his chief title to fame, and in a dozen other volumes of a similar character, Eisen produced a most representative type of the Louis XV vignettes, invented and drawn with incomparable facility and spirit. In the words of Lady Dilke: "By the grace "and wit that distinguished his conception of such themes he made his very "personal reputation. Cochin had something to say as to the scheme of his alle- "gorical designs, Choffard gave them a final touch with his unique *culs-de-lampe*,[4] "Boucher's influence may be recognized in his drawing, but these things are not of "the essence of Eisen's art. His special gift resides in the power to handle indelicate "subjects with the most exquisite delicacy. This fine sense never forsook him: no "matter how suggestive the situation, Eisen rarely becomes vulgar," although it should be added he is seldom expressive or animated. And yet by nature the artist was anything but refined; his bringing up had not only been illiterate but coarse, and the sudden disfavour into which he fell with his semi-royal pupil was accounted for by an accident denoting an appalling lack of tact. Having drawn at Madame de Pompadour's request a coat of some new shape for the King, he had an identical one made for himself and wore it at Versailles on the very day when Louis XV donned his for the first time.[5]

Greedy and yet absent-minded, Eisen resented any attempt to induce him to fulfil his engagements, although he would insist upon obtaining payment in advance. His lovely drawings for the "Trials of sentiment" by D'Arnaud,[6] who could not afford to pay for them in full, were found among the goods and chattels of a milliner of dubious renown, Mlle. Chonchon; no end of pretty cuts of the same order went astray through the artist's carelessness. When he died, money was owing on all sides. Pupils he had none: indeed, it would have been impossible for him to instill into others the subtle qualities which gave charm to his work. "Some "might imitate his freedom: none could boast the same dexterity in the avoidance "of the foolish and the commonplace."

Although his composition and grouping emanated distinctly from Boucher, yet thanks to his light touch he remained always Eisen, the gay, witty, elegant, if soulless *estampier*, as Edmond de Goncourt calls him with a purposely coined word. Not only was his hand the most velvety of the time to illustrate pleasurable allegories and feminine attractions in 12mo, but his genius for ornamental devices led him to impart a new and dignified expression to the decorative arts. His practical sense of the picturesque and the characteristic, controlled by an uncommonly

discriminating taste, chastened the mould in which wall panels, furniture, bronzes, china, and plate were cast. Thus, by rescuing the so-called *métiers du goût* from the inflated curves of a Meissonnier, and converting them to the sedate lines of a Gouthière, by blending Trianon with Pompeii, Eisen, the goldsmith of vignettes, contributed to the evolution of the Louis XVI style.

[1] *Vignette,* originally a flourish of vine leaves and tendrils on manuscripts, was a term applied in the eighteenth century to any small ornamental design or illustration not enclosed by a definite border. The art of the vignettists reached its zenith between 1747 and 1773, when the most brilliantly illustrated books, Laborde's songs, the Molière of de Bret, Dorat's "Baisers" and "Fables," were published. Not to take French vignettes into account would be deliberately to omit one of the prettiest and most original branches of French art under Louis XV and Louis XVI. Book lovers at first had not welcomed the lavish employment of illustrations. In reference to the La Fontaine edition of 1726, Mathieu Marais wrote to President Bouhier: "I have been the first to curse the borders set in fashion by our publishers who are "sillier than children with their pictures." But the artists who devoted themselves to the task showed such admirable dexterity and ingenuity that the public was conquered, and vignettes became the indispensable adjunct to every text. Illustrations were no longer confined to works of romance and poetry, or to serio-comic studies of life and character; they encroached on moral treatises, the most unlikely pasture to nourish the imagination of designers.

[2] *Rocaille* was the cumulative designation given in the seventeenth century to all sorts of shells and pebbles used in the decoration of artificial grottoes. The name was applied under Louis XV to scroll ornaments suggested by the shells themselves and then gradually to a style of which sinuous and wavy lines were the graphic formula: no more pilasters, no straight columns, no lintels, but garlands, festoons, and scallops; a profusion of interweaved curves; every volute and spiral aiming at effect, taking the eye by surprise. With it all an exquisite sense of proportion and a marvellous skill of execution.

[3] The famous edition of La Fontaine's tales published in 1762 is known as that of the *Fermiers-Généraux* or Farmers-General, the members of a privileged association who leased the fiscal revenues of the nation, and with the connivance of ministers, courtiers, and bankers, built vast fortunes upon the people's distress. Thirty-two *Fermiers* were sentenced to death by Robespierre in 1794, though it did not follow that every one of them was guilty of peculation, extortion, or bribery. Voltaire wrote: "There dwell in Persepolis "forty plebeian Kings who hold the Persian Empire by lease and once in a while pay a trifling considera-"tion for it to the Crown."

As a redeeming feature the first financial institution of the French kingdom spared no expense on a few stupendous literary publications: a characteristic trait this of the morals and manners of the period, one of the finest outlays of the intellectual and sensual wealth of usurers or Maecenases under Louis XV. The tales of La Fontaine remain one of the standard models of *galant* engraving applied to the truly regal decoration of more or less improper stories. The original Eisen drawings for them are in the collection of Baroness James de Rothschild; the best copy of the 1762 edition, in a gorgeous mosaic binding, is in the Olry-Roederer library.

[4] *Cul-de-lampe,* a fanciful design used in filling up blank spaces in a book, is a term borrowed from decorative architecture: the under part of a church lamp having first suggested an ornament for the centre of a ceiling or an arch.

[5] Pujol relates the story in his "Galerie Historique," published in 1786.

[6] "Les Epreuves du sentiment," 6 vols., by Baculard d'Arnaud, 1775-78, with 27 illustrations, 27 vignettes, and 27 tail-pieces of the greatest beauty by Eisen and Marillier.

113-116.

L'ACCORD DE MARIAGE—LE BOUQUET LE TRIC-TRAC—LA COMÈTE

Two pairs engraved by Robert Gaillard and Jacques Philippe Lebas respectively

The etching of "L'Accord"; the first state of the "Bouquet"; second state of "Tric-Trac" and "Comète."

THE honesty and neatness of the work of GAILLARD (1722-1785) patronized by Wille and principally known as one of the engravers employed by Boucher and by Greuze, were supposed to compensate for his lack of originality. Under an impression of his "Jupiter and Callisto" at the Bibliothèque Nationale is the hand-written mention: "Gaillard, French engraver, alive, a good man: no warmth."

It must not be assumed that Eisen was solely concerned with vignettes or tiny cuts. Some of his drawings are of larger dimensions than ordinary prints, and he exhibited besides quite a few pictures for, unlike his fellow draughtsmen, he could emerge occasionally from the limitations of a special calling to resume his first avocation of painter of religious and secular subjects. Following the example of his father, he produced a dozen interior and *genre* scenes in oils, the most successful of which were the "Marriage settlement," with its quaint episode of the bridegroom handing a purse to the bride; the "Nosegay," forerunner of a far-famed pair by Debucourt; the "Tric-Trac" and "Comète," both prompted by games favoured by Madame de Pompadour; pleasing, interesting, almost coquettish compositions every one of them, though rather spiritless, betraying the Flemish origin of a little master to whom animation, by-play, the exquisite subtleties of Parisian expression, had come as an acquired taste, not as an innate gift.

Where are the pictures on which the artist staked a share of his reputation? Who has seen them, who could put a value upon them nowadays? To establish the authenticity of a few canvases vaguely attributed to Eisen, two or three unquestioned originals are wanting. Their interpretations by Lebas and Gaillard are the only documents to go by, if we must form an idea of the painter's style, which would seem to have been broad and rather impersonal in comparison with that of the consummate vignettist. Placed next to the "Pastorals," the "Seasons,"

the "Hours of the day" (Nos. 124-134), the double set before us will determine the difference better than a page of comparative criticism.

Apparently the poet employed by the publisher of these four plates was not hampered with the unwritten precept that moral, philosophical, or even humorous thoughts inserted under a print should not only be prompted by experience or common sense but also gracefully turned. The doggerel commenting on the "Bouquet" is decidedly in bad taste, that on "Tric-trac" is so involved that the hackneyed comparison between love and chance loses its point. As for the rhyme on "La Comète," to explain that a court card with the comet is exchangeable for one with nine pips needed no effort of imagination.

The "Bouquet" was re-engraved in reverse by Daudet, whose plate exists. Under the title of "Mother's birthday" Fisher reproduced it in mezzotint. The etching of "L'Accord de mariage" before us, bearing the mark of the Mühlbacher collection, is quoted by Bourcard.

117.

LE CONCERT MÉCANIQUE

Engraved by JOSEPH DE LONGUEIL in 1769

First and second states.
Coat of arms of Count de Saint Florentin.

UNDER the high patronage of Madame de Pompadour, Eisen was such a general favourite that Richard, assistant to the famous Vaucanson,[1] gave him a commission to illustrate the prospectus of the exhibition held in the Royal Library of three self-moving automatons playing the piano, the violin, and the 'cello. The drawing was to represent Richard himself in the act of doing the honours of his invention to Count de Saint Florentin, Minister of the Household of Louis XV.[2]

As the souvenir card of an entertainment which caused a sensation in Paris and was repeated by royal command at Versailles, the print is a curiosity. Its third state without the chandelier is often met with: but the first, with white cartouche and tablet, is decidedly rare, and the second, with a lighted chandelier and before a flame over the genius on the harpsicord was suppressed, is welcomed by collectors.

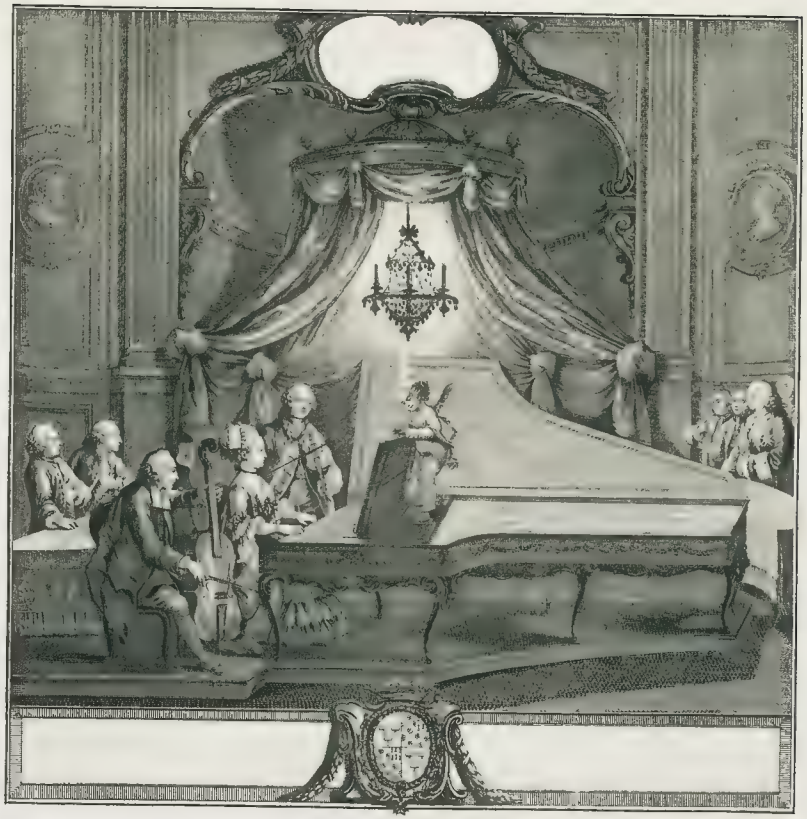
Edmond de Goncourt enters the composition among that section of the artist's works which had an industrial purpose.

[1] VAUCANSON (1709-1782), made an artificial duck which performed the functions of eating, drinking, swimming, and quacking; he also made a flute player. A writing automaton shown in 1769 by a rival mechanist proved to be a pentagraph worked by a confederate out of sight, as was the "Chess player" exhibited the same year by Maelzel in London.

[2] Count de SAINT FLORENTIN (1705-1777) is said, without any serious foundation, to have issued blank letters *de cachet* under the King's private seal, by which justice could be interfered with. On account of the many titles conferred upon him, Duc de la Vrillière among them, the following inscription was suggested for his tomb: "Here lies a mean-looking little man, who bore three different names and did not "leave one behind."

LE CONCERT MÉCANIQUE

By J. de Longueil. After C. D. J. Eisen



118, 119.

DAME À SA TOILETTE—L'AMANT PRESSANT

A pair engraved by ?

Only state.

THE above titles are suggested by Mr. Danlos, as no definite rubric was ever assigned to this exceedingly rare and unlettered pair, which has not turned up at auction since the Behague sale in 1877. The engraver is unknown. Bourcard describes both prints according to the Behague catalogue under the heading of Eisen. Messrs. de Goncourt do not mention them among the book illustrations by that draughtsman, of whose works, however, they do not profess to furnish a complete list. What else could they be but vignettes, representing two incidental scenes in a novel or a play? Eisen undertook many such tasks without bringing them all to an issue.

120, 121.

LE JOUR—LA NUIT

A pair engraved by Jean-Baptiste Patas

First state.

PATAS (1748-1817), a specialist of vignettes, first attracted attention to his work by reproducing many pictures for the "Cabinet Choiseul," the illustrated catalogue of one of the greatest collections of the time. As a result Moreau entrusted to him two plates for the "Monument du costume." Portalis and Beraldi consider his "Jour" and "Nuit" as "interesting": Bourcard calls them "charming and sought after." Although Patas was apt at times to be dull and leaden with the burin, his charges were high; was it because Eisen had managed to obtain from him various sums on account of drawings which he did not execute, while the engraver was never reimbursed?

The borders framing both prints are in keeping with the superb interior decoration and the dresses represented. A certain lack of individual expression, a slight mannerism, betray the shortcomings of Eisen whenever he steps out of the minute field of his vignettes, like a goldsmith who would turn sculptor. Then no flounces and no patches could inspirit his dainty dames, no finery make his dandies feel more at ease than flunkeys dressed up in their master's clothes. If these two compositions could be seen through concave lenses they would recover the character which they have somewhat lost by being drawn under the influence, apparently, of a magnifying glass.

The axiom inscribed under the first scene sounds more cynical than original: "As soon as Hymen is weary, love flies away": the rhyme under the second is as wretched in form as trivial in substance: "Unless love is of the party, nothing "could be more foolish."

As already stated in a similar case, the numerous traces of burin on the margins of this pair are the best evidence of early impressions, before the slight scratches made superficially by the engraver when trying his point were obliterated by the gradual wear and tear of the plate going through the regular printing process.

Two original pencil sketches for "La Nuit" of the same size as the engraving, with some slight alterations, were once in the de Goncourt and the Mühlbacher collections respectively.

LE JOUR

By J. B. Patas. After C. D. J. Eisen

LA NUIT

By J. B. Patas. After C. D. J. Eisen

122, 123.

LA BELLE NOURRICE—LA JOLIE FERMIÈRE

A pair engraved by Joseph de Longueil

First state.

THIS pair, sometimes designated under the less circumstantial name of "Les Beautés," is looked upon by Portalis and Beraldi as one of Eisen's finest works and rather indiscriminately entered by Messrs. de Goncourt in the category of the artist's rural subjects. Judging by their episodical character and the quarto size, both vignettes must have been intended to illustrate a novel. A special interest attaches to each scene owing to the careful reproduction of the Louis XV decoration as applied to what were called *petits appartements*, seldom reproduced in pictures and prints owing to their small size and low ceilings. When the stately receptions favoured by Louis XIV had had their day, the relaxation of social customs under the Regency reflected itself in the interior appointments and distribution of private residences, in keeping with more informal gatherings and fewer guests. Boudoirs and breakfast rooms were the principal innovations.

As the first states of this pair are extremely rare and both copperplates were soon worn out, the impressions with Daumont's address are preferable to those subsequently issued by Crepy and by Pillet. Obviously the two "Beauties" were in demand.

124-131.

LES HEURES DU JOUR—LES SAISONS

Two sets of four each engraved by Joseph de Longueil

First state.

BOTH sets, according to Portalis and Beraldi, rank with Eisen's chief titles to fame; in their interpretation de Longueil gave us of his best. The proportions of the figures, sometimes faulty in Eisen's drawings, are here as on the three "Pastorals" of a delicately poised elegance, reminiscent of Jean Goujon and curiously coincident with Tiepolo's style. "Hours" and "Seasons" represent the sort of work one should expect from the illustrator of La Fontaine's tales, from his facility of invention, his power of touching with piquancy every expression and pose devised for our entertainment. What could be more characteristic of airy mockery than the fat bumptiousness of the cook serving a huge pie at the mid-day meal, or the vexed countenance of the abbé holding a bad hand at the card table in the afternoon? In the evening scene, as the clock marks six, it is to be assumed that dressing for supper, not undressing for bed, is the theme developed by the artist with a thorough knowledge of up-to-date appointments of indoor and outdoor decoration. Where are the rhetorical and impersonal allegories of Italian tradition favoured under Louis XIV and fallen by Lancret's initiative into sudden disuse under the Regent?

The influence of Boucher, often apparent in the compositions of Eisen, is especially manifest in the "Seasons." The charm of spring, the pleasure of summer, the delights of autumn, the amusements of winter, were a free adaptation of a set of over-doors commissioned to the first painter of Louis XV by Madame de Pompadour, the last of which reproduced the sport most favoured by the favourite, that of sleighing at Versailles.[1] When Eisen, her drawing master, submitted to her the four vignettes, she called them, according to Grimm, "intaglios à la Boucher," a compliment as flattering for the technique of the draughtsman as for the engraver's interpretation. The prints, triumphs of art in their way, met with an extraordinary success and went through four states, of which the first before letters and numbers is so rare that collectors must be satisfied with the impressions bearing Daumont's address, consecutively replaced by that of Crespy and of Pillet. Bourcard picks out "Spring" as the finest of the set, the quintessence of *baroque*[2] grace in figures, setting, dresses, and attitudes.

E. and J. de Goncourt enter the set of "Hours" in the category of Eisen's scenes of fashionable life, and mention the original pencil and wash drawings in the Cuvillier collection. They place the set of "Seasons" among the "Pastorals."

[1] Catherine II had presented the Marquise with a sleigh and a wonderful set of fur rugs. Boucher's four decorative panels were engraved by Daullé, a somewhat cold interpreter.

[2] *Baroque*, originally a Portuguese jeweller's term applied to irregularly shaped pearls, should not be interpreted disparagingly with reference to the Louis XV style as conceived and applied in France, with a marked preference given to curves over straight lines. In Italy the *barocco* degenerated into the most extravagant ornamental designs to the detriment of form, a nightmare of twisted and tormented strokes, of unnecessary reliefs, in the midst of which the genius of the Renaissance ultimately foundered.

132-134.

THREE PASTORALS

Engraved by Joseph de Longueil

First states.

THOUGH the curiously elongated figures are almost Tiepolesque, each composition suggests a picture by Boucher seen through the wrong end of an opera glass. Shepherdesses with enticing airs and wanton, fluttering ways, simpering village swains with mincing manners, trace their pedigree to the dreamy stageland of Watteau. Under the influence of Boucher, who adapted them to the country life of his own hot-houses and to the evergreen arbours of his landscapes, pretty peasants with beribboned shoes and fluffy ruffles, with patches on their cheeks, a madrigal on their lips, became the wonted allegories of Arcadian love and leisure. The drawing master of Madame de Pompadour imitated the first painter of Louis XV when he composed this set of rococo idylls known as "Country pleasures," "Country dance," and "Rural concert": three gems, the quintessence of the intangible grace of Eisen's pencil; three intaglios under de Longueil's firm and delicate graver.

JEAN HONORÉ FRAGONARD

(1732-1806)

POETRY that lifts high above this earth the soul of an epoch, that carries the mind of a people to the brink of the infinite and dips it into it for one moment, creative poetry that reveals to humanity a new ideal, true poetry, was unknown to French eighteenth-century literature. But French art had two poet painters: Watteau, a son of the North, the Pensieroso of the Regency, the master of the Elysian fields of passion; Fragonard, of Latin genius, of Gallic wit, whose pictures suggest the Amatory art of a renovated Ovid.

"Can you see high up, half lost in the sky of the 'Embarquement pour "Cythère,'" asks Edmond de Goncourt, "a swarm of mischievous Cupids, and "do you know whither they fly? They are flying to Fragonard, to scatter on his "palette the glinting dust of their butterfly wings."

❖ ❖ ❖

FRAGONARD was born at Grasse on the coast-land, interwoven with vines and orange groves, between the ruddy Esterel and the ever blue horizon of the Mediterranean. Not only was he born there, but his disposition, moulded by the lulling serenity of that shallow strip of Eden, reflected the radiant warmth of its sky and its gardens. Whether he painted a domestic scene, illustrated a tale of La Fontaine, or sketched Love and Folly, his windows seemed to open invariably on his native landscape and to look towards Italy. The very essence of his art is accounted for, most of its manifestations are excused, by that fragrant beggar, the country of his birth. The rustic characters he represents indulge in the sun-basked semi-nudity of a simple, easy life in the cornfields; his low vaulted architectures are typically Southern, his backgrounds are enlivened by the myrtles, the briars, the dishevelled and quivering weeds, of which as a boy he must have wrenched armfuls from the verdant banks of the Foux, the better to frame his pictures some day. Since his colours are distinctly Provençal, how could his conceptions be foreign to the luxuriance of that clime?

An exuberant merriment floating over the dire necessity of making both ends meet, a lazy activity, the intention to derive only pleasure from work, a longing for a smooth existence without effort, all these leanings seasoned with the happiest unconcern about the morrow, impelled Fragonard to scrape along at his start and fight it out as well as he could.

When his father, a glove maker, lost his little all in some unfortunate speculation and moved to Paris, Jean Honoré was fifteen. For three years he pretended to work in a notary's office where, instead of engrossing deeds, he sketched and made caricatures which attracted somehow the attention of Boucher. But, on the plea that the king's first painter had no time to teach the a b c of his art, the young fellow was referred to Chardin. Although the great luminist did not think much of the apprentice, yet, after six months, he sent him back better equipped to Boucher's studio. Fragonard acquired there so completely the master's style that he was entrusted with the adaptation of some of his paintings for the Gobelins. In 1752, without having followed the Academy course, he carried off the so-called Roman prize. Having thus been admitted to the French school in Rome under Natoire, he benefited by the study of the old Masters, though always remembering Boucher's parting hint that a surfeit of Raphael and Michelangelo would only divert his bent.

A summer sojourn at the Villa d'Este as the guest of the Abbé de St. Non did more than any official training towards shaping his artistic personality. In those romantic gardens, flowers of Italianism, among secular cypresses, crumbling terraces and fountains, the notion dawned upon him of a decorative but apparently undressed Nature, an intermediary between the Renaissance pleasance and an English park, which he was subsequently to embody in his pictures and his drawings. In company with Hubert Robert, a fellow-student as light of purse as he, as rich in youth and imagination, he discovered in the neighbouring Campagna a new and poetical form for the interpretation of antique monuments, and in order to give it the most incisive expression, he took to etching on the example of St. Non. Added to this influence was the deep impression derived in Venice from the sumptuousness of Tiepolo, whose decadent and florid grace came nearer to his choice.[1]

He returned to Paris in 1763. Two years afterwards he was elected by acclamation to succeed Deshayes at the Academy on the strength of a large historical painting, Coresus and Callirhoe, now at the Louvre; a sort of milky-white phan-

tasmagoric scene, lighted up by the sulphureous reverberations of a sacrificial fire. Although Fragonard had tackled what Boucher called "a huge machine in the "grand style" with qualities more dazzling than substantial, yet from the stirring canvas there cried out the dumb voice of passion unheard of in the eighteenth century, and pathos, a new aim, suddenly dawned before artists. Pompously praised in the first wonderment which, according to Diderot, "soon cooled down," bought by order of Louis XV and reproduced in tapestry, but paid for only after three years, the success of this effort revealed to the artist his own possibilities and limitations. Thenceforth his pictorial ambitions must be bound within a smaller stage, a purpose easily supported by the determination to work and quit work with the self-indulgence of a child of nature.[2]

Therefore, no more historical subjects. Better take up the hint of a Pompadour, who, bored by classic scenes and portraits of colourless big-wigs, urged the artists of her little court to break once in a while the Academy commandments and be less solemn in the choice of a composition and the attire of their sitters. Had not Vanloo introduced in his "Spanish conversations" a becoming substitute for the usual French dresses and dispensed with the conventional draperies folded and unfolded before the public for the last three quarters of a century? Fragonard followed suit. He found satin gowns, short capes, doublets, slashed sleeves, and ruffles well adapted to the Tiepolesque half-length figures in which he was engaged for a time, as a compromise between a study and a portrait. The pair known as "l'Étude, l'Inspiration," and also the "Leçon de musique," now at the Louvre, are admirable examples of a transient manner dropped by the Master when in a life-size picture of the dancer Guimard, the thinnest of all nymphs, he reverted to the style of Boucher, veiling in clouds of white the delicate freshness of the varied hues of rose and blue, relieved on a background of pearly greys.

Venus, who in myth had risen from the sea-foam, leapt in the days of Louis XV out of the sudden fortune of Pompadour and du Barry to become the new ideal of sculptors, painters, and decorators. Her cult was reflected in the growing demand on the part of amateurs for those amorous scenes with which the name of Fragonard will ever be coupled, scenes made acceptable by the virtuosity of a facile brush, the most subtle tints, and the incorporeal gift of Latin grace.

Though nothing less modest can well be conceived than pre-revolutionary

French art, yet conventional good breeding under Louis XV and Louis XVI objected to grossness. In the choice and treatment of such situations of light comedy as, for example, "l'Escarpolette" or "l'Armoire" (Nos. 155, 137), Fragonard combined a happy licence and an attractive piquancy in characterizing gesture and expression with an admirable elegance of arrangement slightly theatrical in effect but very tactfully meant. His intentional apology for themes essentially free lay in vaguely outlined or only half-shown forms, in colours which, rather than painter's colours, were a poet's pigments mixed with such stuff as day-dreams are made of. The misty indecision of his most suggestive groups is likened by Paul de St. Victor to furtive nods exchanged in the dark by lovers that might be voluptuous ghosts from the eighteenth-century underworld of pleasure. The sketches of this improviser of genius bear witness to the self-respect of his audacity.

As for many engravings after Fragonard, how could the original sketchiness of undraped forms be strictly adhered to by means of a process of technical precision, unaided by colour? What a poet-painter left half unsaid ran the risk of being expressed more plainly by a burinist or stippler. Granted that the plates of the "Verrou," the "Fontaine," the "Songe d'amour" (Nos. 149, 152, 153), reveal better than the pictures themselves how with the breath of a sigh Fragonard meant to temper Cupid's unrestraint or turn the frolics of "la Chemise enlevée" into a modern allegory of dawn; yet by way of graphic compensation the fluent interpretations of the "Jets d'eau," the "Pétards," the "Verre d'eau," "Ma chemise brûle" (Nos. 156, 157, 159, 145), underline the sauciness of each scene. After all, these pert compositions—*estampes gaies*—were the outcome of an art not necessarily serious, since it reflected contemporary manners and morals, or rather the lack of them, with an accuracy born of quick observation.

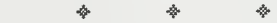
When Fragonard himself dashed off on the copper, as he had done on a drawing, the village drama of "l'Armoire" (No. 137), without carrying it further than the etching, he probably foresaw how the difficulty of making a finished print out of a mere sketch was bound to tell on the engraved reproductions of a section of his works. As for N. de Launay, one of the Master's closest friends, by confining his attentions to subjects that could stand a thorough precision of outline, he gave us in the "Escarpolette," "la bonne Mère," and a so-called domestic set (Nos. 155, 167, 161-165) some of the finest performances of a wonderful burin.

Towards the close of the reign of Louis XV, Fragonard became the rage as decorator of *folies*, the sumptuous little residences which were rising fast in the new quarters of Paris. The magician whose brushes were wont to spite a grey horizon and create sunshine was called upon to give to ceilings the semblance of bright skies and to paint the walls of apartments where financiers and courtesans could neither stand the bareness of white stucco nor the monotony of silk hangings. In 1773 he panelled with pictures "Terpsichore's room" in the hotel built by Ledoux for Mlle. Guimard in the Chaussée d'Antin at the expense of the Prince de Soubise, who kept the dancer, says Bachaumont, "in the most incredible luxury." But the undertaking culminated in a quarrel, and the artist, out of revenge, transmogrified the features already drawn by him of the goddess of the dance into those of a fury, writing under the weird likeness, as Grimm's story goes: "the most wicked spider "that ever came in my way."[3]

Mme. du Barry, who had previously bought four overdoors by Fragonard, commissioned to him the world-famous canvases known as the "Roman d'amour de la Jeunesse," now in the Frick collection in New York, wherein the old, old story of love and youth is told with a touch of stagy unreality. A memorandum of Ledoux, architect of the pavilion at Louveciennes, dated 1772, refers to the size and scheme of a drawing-room, "to be kept in keeping with the variegated shades "of the flowers scattered right and left on the panels in course of execution."[4] But if the last mistress of Louis XV as well as the leading opera star had their whims, Fragonard had his will. Having disagreed with his semi-queenly patroness, he rolled up the unpaid-for paintings and years afterwards adapted them to the salon of Mr. Maubert, who gave him hospitality at Grasse during the reign of Terror. There, with pathetic appropriateness, he added to the series but never finished a fifth subject, his swan song, "Disillusionment."[4] With that exception, all that remains of Fragonard's large decorative works are a few vague contemporary references and anecdotes, one or two mentions of receipts or promises of deferred instalments. The pictures themselves have vanished, together with the walls they once brightened, after enjoying "the brief eternity granted by house wreckers to "the stones of old Paris."

Not satisfied with drawing and painting as means of expressing the unaffected grace and charm of children, for their exclusive sake the Master took to miniatures

and handled the ungrateful process in such an original manner that he overshadowed his predecessors and defied imitators. Placed next to his, even the most brilliant and freest works of Hall and Dumont, touched up with *gouache* and enlivened by rich backgrounds, seem to darken or pale, to betray labour, finicalness, and pin-prickles, to appear to be nothing more than what they are: miniatures. With Fragonard no trace of cross-hatching, no dot, no dryness is detectable, for even when painting on the smallest scale he remained a broad painter. If on a little boy or a girl he discerned the dawn of beauty, as only a mother might have done in a dream, he set down with the brush his idealized vision of chubby and as yet undecided features, of sparkling eyes and golden curls, of a radiant complexion, of an azure transparency at the temples, of a smile that expands, a pretty sullenness that contracts the roses of young lips. Rainbow-tinted diamonds, wonders of mysterious enchantment, the miniatures by Fragonard, wrought with the primitive medium of water-colours, are comparable only in eighteenth-century art with the bas-reliefs of Clodion.[5]



Whether he meant or not to strike out his own course, all Fragonard had learnt in Italian and French galleries relapsed eventually into the alluring blues and pinks of his apprenticeship.[6] Even when he tried to be himself and forget his master, the training of Boucher got the best of the old pupil. Thence the doubtful attribution of certain sketches given to either artist for want of a definite personal characteristic and made more perplexing by Beauvarlet's corresponding prints (Nos. 143, 144).

A skit on the exhibition of 1773 refers to the airy "unfinish, the idiosyncrasies, "the clashes and dashes, the nondescript *tartouillis* of this divine Frago, the leading "brush of France and Navarre, Michelangelo and Titian combined." No doubt, without pretending to rival the pontiffs of painting, he borrowed from them as openly as did Sir Joshua Reynolds, and when wanting to rise up to the grand manner he managed to do so by a compromise between different styles. Allied with the warmth of the Venetians, his ruddy colours hailing from Flanders attained almost a Watteauesque glow. Both from Correggio and Murillo he derived a silvery vapourousness: the science of chiaroscuro, the outbursts of golden light and vigorous shadows, he owed to Rembrandt: the skilfully broken folds of his satins were taken from Terburg; above all, as Edmond de Goncourt sums it up: "he let the haunting

"remembrance of Rubens run through the spirit of Tiepolo and the dazzlement of "Boucher."[7]

However much this inspired and flamboyant painter may have been assisted by uncommon gifts of assimilation, his individuality is stamped on a certain grandeur above the Pompadourian era, on the genuine sentiment of domestic scenes treated with a realism of his own far preferable to the didacticism of Greuze, on the clever contrast of flowery and subdued tones, on the power of working colour to the perfection of visual charm, colour of which the lovely tints of young flesh were the key-note. Through his familiarity with the old Masters he frenchified their technique for his own use to that extent that while practising it he remained the Parisian, the *galant* Fragonard of the "Fontaine d'amour," the "Escarpolette," the "Chemise enlevée" . . . .

His works present specimens of two distinct methods: slack the brush may have been to-day or broad or free, to-morrow it will achieve the over-finish of an enamel. So marked is the opposition, that one might infer the Master had two different sets of patrons, one loving elaborate paintings where each detail is fondled and minutely put in, the other craving for sketches knocked off at one go. According to taste and demand he seems to have altered his means of expression and the manœuvre of his pencil. Diderot compared several of his drawings to masses of cotton wool, lacking body and precision, apt to vanish into smoke.[8] Certainly he was less concerned with form than with colour, certainly his engravers paid far more attention than he did to definite effect, but this characteristic vagueness adds fascination to compositions which, jotted down and dashed off as they are, leave behind many laborious contemporary paintings. The artist who troubled so little about immortality that by way of signature upon most of his creations he scribbled only half his name, is Fragonard to posterity in a few pictures only; he is less and yet more in his sketches: he is "Frago," informally, genially.[9]

❖ ❖ ❖

For want of precise information his existence is a sketch in itself. Little else leaks out from the indiscretions of the time beyond the statement that as an elderly man he was still a boy in an old skin.[10] A sort of twilight suits the biography of a poet-painter who achieved glory while dreading fuss.[11] At a distance of more than a century his personality might be likened to that of a happy shadow holding one finger to his lips. There is a tradition that he lent his own countenance to some of

the mischievous lovers scattered through his works: above all to the strapping fellow whom with cudgel and fists two irate parents drag out of the "Armoire" (No. 137).

Whatever may have been his illusions, the revolutionary upheaval ruined him like the majority of his fellow artists. The reign of pleasure was over. Friendly to him in private life,[12] David, in whose conversation the names of Watteau and Boucher were terms of disparagement, could find no use for the chief exponent of those amorous frolics which had delighted the Paris of yore. Having been too closely connected with the hangers-on of the Monarchy, Fragonard fled to Grasse. When he came back he found Loves and Graces supplanted by Greek heroes or Roman matrons.[13] Forgotten and poor, he died in his lodgings at the Louvre. The "Journal de l'Empire" did not even devote to him, as to Greuze a few months before, a single necrologic line.

For more than half a century Fragonard was so completely ignored that Lübcke in his History of Art, published in 1873, omits the very mention of his name. After stating that during the last thirty years or so the Master has amply regained the position among painters to which his genius entitled him, the "Encyclopædia Britannica" adds the following practical remark: "if appreciation of his art by "modern collectors can be expressed in figures, it is significant that members of the "Rothschild family—in London, Paris, and Vienna—have cornered his works in "time."

[1] Mariette in his "Abecedario" refers to the first groping and timid manner of the best pupil of Boucher, never pleased with himself, always changing, retouching, erasing. As for Tiepolo, in the opinion of Saint Non: "the last of the Venetians ought to have chummed with Peter de Hoogh" (?).

[2] He may have been disgusted with large pictures not only by his vain solicitations for payment but also by the hostility of official critics which led Greuze to remark: "every exhibition deprives me of a year "of commissions."

[3] Théophile Fragonard gave to Goncourt a somewhat different version of this incident: "My grand-"father was tired of the great airs of the dancer and her lack of consideration. One day, as she asked him for "the hundredth time whether the work would ever be finished and the room cleared, he replied: 'As far as "'I am concerned it is quite finished' and left." Nothing could ever induce him to return.

"Skeleton of the Graces" was Guimard's popular nickname. Mr. J. Doucet has two beautiful doors painted by Fragonard for her boudoir with miniature medallions of "Le Café" and "Le Concert," connected by Italian arabesques. Portalis is mistaken in ascribing to Fragonard the decoration of the lovely boudoir of Mme. de Serilly now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which was carried out by La Rottière.

[4] It is surprising that Goncourt should refer to these panels as representing the four ages of man. Lady Dilke, who described them when still in position at Grasse, not only omitted to say that the fifth is merely sketched in monochrome, but mistook it for the first of the series, as if the Cupid on the column, instead of pointing as he does to the hopeless flight of time, beckoned to a lover from afar. The whole point of the conclusion added by Fragonard to the original sequel is missed by this strange *quid pro quo*.

Judging from the difference of tonality between the two pairs of large panels, warm and blonde on the first as on the master's early works, bluish on the second, one is led to suppose that the commission was only half executed when Fragonard quarrelled with Mme. du Barry, and that the set was carried to completion years later, probably at Grasse.

5 Already a successful painter of fans, Marianne Gérard, the wife of Fragonard, took to miniatures with such success that whenever her husband gave the final fillip to her little works it was not easy to distinguish them from his own. At an exhibition in 1782 a critic wrote of her as "Rosalba's rival." The catalogue of the great De Veri sale in 1785 describes "eight of her miniatures treated with the lightest, most graceful "touch, of a truth and freshness leaving nothing to be desired." Several so-called Fragonard miniatures in European and American collections are either by Madame Fragonard or by Francis Laîné (1721-1810). The genuine article is almost a Rothschildian speciality. Gold is dross compared with it. If the boy dressed up as Pierrot were ever offered at auction, it might fetch the value of its weight in radium.

6 Lady Dilke remarks that although Fragonard did not depend on blue so largely as Boucher, he has substituted it on "L'Escarpolette" to his favourite violet "with the same intention of heightening the effect "of his central mass of rose and white, for in the strange theatrical green moonlight of the scene, violet would "have given a false note."

7 The Walferdin collection, formed in the fifties and sixties, contributed more than any other influence or teaching to reinstate Fragonard in his proper place, and was full of the Master's astoundingly clever borrowings from almost every great colourist; some of them with such autograph notes at the back as "a memory of Pietro da Cortona, of Barroccio, of Solimena, of Tiepolo." When sold, in 1880, the prices realized were quoted as unreasonably high. In 1912 at the Doucet sale some of the same drawings fetched from fifteen to twenty times as much, thus proving to have been one of the most judicious investments made in the nineteenth century.

8 Diderot was not always best pleased with the works of Fragonard—"he has just painted a fine picture, "who knows if he can paint another"—probably because Boucher had found in him his best heir and the master's faults were to be detected in the pupil: a certain affectation in the distribution of the groups, in the expression of the faces.

9 "Slovenly and perfunctory the play of his pencil may sometimes be, but it is always suggestive. Not "a trick of coquetry in dress or manner can escape it. Lively and exact in the appreciation of every pose, of "the intentional coyness of the turn of a head, or the wave of a hand, it is equally cunning in the choice "of a breast-knot, in all those devices of the toilet which are intended to create 'a sweet disorder, kindling "'in cloathes a wantonesse.' The licence of such revelations had long worn every disguise that could be bor- "rowed from the wardrobe of Olympus. The famous store which had served the turn of two centuries was "now exhausted: love and the graces lent their most secret charms to the pleasures of the hour" (Lady Dilke).

10 There seems to be no doubt that after his marriage to Marie Anne Gérard in 1769 he earned money. The gossipy diary of his patron and friend Bergeret refers to the comfortable life of the couple, to a well-served table which could attract epicures, to tapestries, Boulle furniture, objects of *virtu*; last, not least, to a silver vase "chiselled by Cellini," subsequently bought by Mlle. Lange, and now supposed to be in the Alphonse de Rothschild collection. With it all, an easy-going, thoroughly unpretentious existence.

Fragonard had a fine portfolio of prints, some classic, many contemporary ones, all de Launay's proofs among them. One day, after the Revolution, he saw smoke come through a door of his lodgings and found his son standing before a bonfire of old paper, "making a sacrifice to good taste, in honour of David." The whole collection was burned.

11 Artistic crotchets were combined with much kindness in his disposition. As St. Non, who had once gathered a distinguished company to meet him, announced his arrival by saying "here is our Prince," the guest of honour turned his back and made for the door.

12 When a mere follower of Vanloo, David obtained Fragonard's permission to finish the decorative panels which had been commenced by him for Mlle. Guimard, a signal favour he never forgot.

13 Fragonard was credited with saying that David impressed upon his pupils the importance of adhering to sculptural lines even in portraiture to the extent that the mildest contemporary sitter would be given the muscular development of a frock-coated demi-god and show through the cassimere of his trousers the salient cap-bones of Agamemnon's knees.

135, 136.

ANNETTE À L'ÂGE DE QUINZE ANS— ANNETTE À L'ÂGE DE VINGT ANS

A pair engraved by Jean Godefroy

First states.
Coat of arms of Mr. Vassal de St. Hubert.

Godefroy (1771-1839), born in London and the pupil of Simon, a French burinist who had settled there, is known in England for his prints of the singer Morichelli, of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and for a reproduction of Bartolozzi's "Miss Farren" after Lawrence. Having ventured his doubts as to the appropriateness of a fierce moustache which Bonaparte was made to wear on a portrait by Fossi given him to engrave, the editor assured him that if the portrait was to have a ready sale under George III, a ferocious mien was indispensable. Godefroy engraved the fan presented by the city of Paris to the Empress Josephine on her coronation.

Bourcard shows lack of psychology by stating that this pair is "insignificant." Portalis expresses a different appreciation when, among a choice of rural Fragonard subjects, he picks out the pathetic charm of two Annettes, one at fifteen contentedly minding her sheep, the other at twenty forgetting the fold because a youth clasps her hand and sets her heart a-beating under stormy skies. Within a landscape in keeping with her state of mind even a shepherdess foresees the cares of life through love's first flashes of lightning.

The tradition of Boucher affects the arrangement of both compositions, happily influenced by Fragonard's personal sentiment, his keener intuition of the sympathy of nature with the troubles of mortals.

137.

L'ARMOIRE

Etched by the Master in 1778

First state.

MORE so than any of his pictures, Fragonard's own etchings—original sketches on copper—bring us in contact with his first conception of a subject, the impelling force of his temperament and the dash of his work. Before such a *chef-d'œuvre* as "L'Armoire" print lovers must regret that the Master should have neglected too soon a side of his talent he had cultivated while in Italy and which made him at once the crispest, the most piquant of French aquafortists.

Anyone who has been privileged to see in the collection of Baron E. de Rothschild the drawing of "Paysannerie"—another title for this subject—and has grasped the breadth of its treatment, will acknowledge that no interpreter other than the artist himself could have engraved it with the same spirit and ease. All the more astonishing is the virtuosity in the distribution of light over the scene, that, unlike the *gouacheurs* of his day, Fragonard depended for it merely on the white of the paper. As for the expressions on the countenance of each rustic character, the inquisitive youngsters included, only a Provençal genius put on his mettle by the commission of a gay and generous patron could have elicited accents or jotted down strokes of such tragi-comic life-likeness.

The "Journal de Paris" of the 27th of November 1778 advertised "L'Armoire" in the following terms: "By etching it himself Mr. Fragonard has stamped this "new work with his wonderful mastery. Wit and Gallic salt he has scattered upon "it profusely: the anger of the parents breaking into the lover's hiding-place is "depicted as forcibly as the girl's shame, the young man's fear. Like the Guillot of "La Fontaine one might say 'the smell of hard blows permeates the air.' The plate "has the rare merit of being entirely by the artist's hand and is sure to meet with "success; it is on sale at Mr. Fragonard's, King's painter, at the Louvre on the side "of the colonnade. With it may be had a print in honour of Franklin"[1]—a strange pairing.

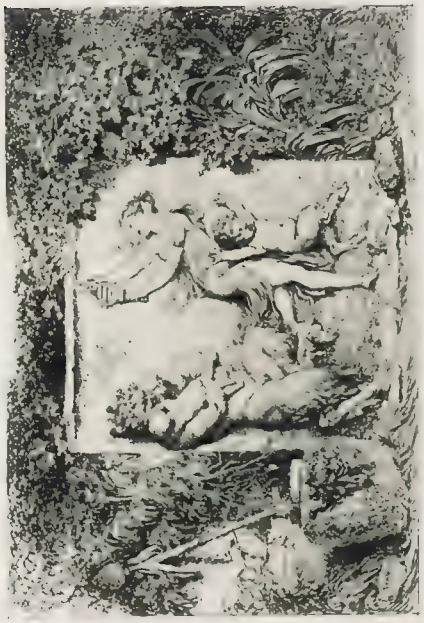
Three are the states of the great etching: the first, a rarity, signed "Frago 1778 sculp, invenit"; the second with scratched letters; the third with the address of Naudet, whose name on some impressions is anagrammatically written Teduan. The original copper-plate exists.

This composition, as popular as the "Verrou," with which Fragonard meant to pair it, was reproduced in a small folio by the burin of Robert de Launay. Both Coron and Guyot, two minor craftsmen, engraved it with certain alterations; Campion copied it in aquatint. On a fifth version issued anonymously and printed in colours the hiding young peasant has been turned into a gallant soldier.

[1] Fragonard drew at least three portraits of Franklin, whom he often met in the *atelier* of St. Non, where the many-sided scientist and statesman studied the secrets of aqua-fortis. The print of one of them, without artists' names, was rather indiscriminately attributed to Mlle. Gérard when sixteen years old; it is inscribed: "Eripuit coelo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis"; another, representing Franklin crowned by Liberty, was etched by St. Non. A titanesque allegory in bistre inscribed "in honour of Franklin," signed by the Master, fetched 48 livres at the Clos sale in 1812.

LES QUATRE BACCHANALES

By and after J. H. Fragonard



138-141.

LES QUATRE BACCHANALES

Etched by the Master in 1763

First states before the numbers: three of them signed "Frago," one dated.

WHEN scouring the Campagna in their student days under the compulsion of Italy, based upon a unique pervasive humanity of soul, Fragonard and Hubert Robert halted wherever fresh subject for work appealed to their faculty of interpretation. No relic of the past depressed them; their drawings lent a smile to the vast desolation of that soil, ruins were made to toy with nature, monuments became features of a picturesque stage setting, antique tombs enlivened the background, and archaeology no longer recognized its venerable landmarks. Before the exuberant wit and the new-fashioned training of these young Frenchmen, there could be no other Rome but what they drew themselves; a sort of old fowl's house "à la Boucher," emerging from the wreck of a triumphal arch.

Attracted by the geniality of the two Academy pensioners, the Abbé de St. Non, a scholar and a dilettante of infinite taste, took them to Tivoli and Frascati, to Naples and the newly unearthed Pompeii, as guests and fellow travellers, as illustrators of his own rambling researches, limners in ordinary of whatever cried out to his instinct and his culture.

In the midst of this impassionate work, this unceasing production of sketches, studies, views, and copies from museums, Fragonard tackled the copper as a diversion, vied in his etchings with the Abbé and easily surpassed him.

Rome, in those days the home of engravers, had already induced more than one French painter to overcome a native aversion to any medium other than colours and try his hand at aqua-fortis. Having discovered from his first attempts that somehow he possessed the hasty needle of the Venetians, Frago engraved Tintoretto, the Carraccis, his favourite florid Tiepolo, thus jotting down no end of mementoes of his travels, mere scrawls, some of them no bigger than a visiting card, yet so powerfully drawn that under his nibbling point the cypresses, terraces, and balustrades of Villa d'Este sparkled with life and light, its fountains played, the old statues awoke. Of his achievements as an etcher the most perfect evidence is conveyed by this quadruple set of Satyrs at play, enticing fictions figured with the earnestness and fineness of a classic bas-relief.

Light as the lightest epigrams of the Anthology, genuine visions of Hellenistic forms, fit models for a Clodion or a Marin, these sculptural gems were framed by the artist within such handfulls of creepers and ivy as nature might entwine round the plinth of a Bacchic shrine. Or with their luscious moss and bind-weeds do they not suggest a set of antique cut stones picked up by Boucher's pupil in a grotto where frolicsome nymphs had dropped them?[1]

Although Portalis knows only of one signed Bacchanal among the four, three of the impressions before us bear the name "Frago." In the second state each is numbered. St. Non etched a reversed copy of the set for his "Recueil de Griffonis."

[1] Bourcard follows the commonplace bent of his taste and passes over "these small uninteresting "prints sometimes called 'the four Satyrs.'"

LE BAISER À LA DÉROBÉE

By N. F. Regnault. After J. H. Fragonard

142.

LE BAISER À LA DÉROBÉE

Engraved by Nicolas François Regnault

First state.

WHILE "le Lever" (No. 298) shows how Regnault when printing in colours could give the illusion of a miniature, this print displays his skill under a different aspect. Without the help of colour the same engraver has transferred from canvas to copper every shade of difference in the lustre of one of those rich silk gowns from which Fragonard was wont at one time to draw the dominant note of his interior scenes, after the manner of the small Dutch masters.

The original copper-plate exists. Rather ingenuously Bourcard remarks that plain genuine states are more sought after than a few rare old hand-coloured impressions, owing to an elaborate manipulation which has encroached upon the straightforward black and white effects. The same might be said of a legion of modern counterfeits.

The picture, formerly in the Lazienski Palace at Warsaw, now at the Ermitage, is one of various readings of a theme altered and re-handled by Fragonard over and over again. The *catalogue raisonné* of his works by de Goncourt registers no less than eight such kisses: "heads that bend, lips that meet, souls that draw "near."

143, 144.

LA BASCULE—COLIN-MAILLARD

A pair engraved by Jacques Firmin Beauvarlet in 1760

Second state.

Beauvarlet (1731-1797) came of the Abbeville school and joined in Paris the *atelier* of Laurent Cars, where he acquired the wholesome tradition of the Drevets, great engravers of portraits. Although Grimm criticised him for overworking his plates in the ingenious effort of mingling graver and point together; although Diderot taxed "this excellent pupil of a considerable master" with a tendency to translate too freely the painters whom he professed to reproduce, yet the softness of the features drawn by his burin, the skill with which he gave the illusion of the skin by breaking his lines with the finest stippling, could hardly be excelled. Porporati, Malœuvre, the two Voyez, Dugoure, Audouin, were a credit to his training.

Much to the merriment of his friends, Beauvarlet, on the death of his first wife, married his step-mother-in-law, whose snug income, combined with a large demand for his prints, brought him comfort and ease. An inventory of the contents of their house, "rue de l'Egalité, ex Condé," taken on the 23 ventôse of the year VII, mentions marbles by Caffieri, clocks chased by Josse Beauvarlet the artist's brother, oriental china with ormolu mounts, rock crystal chandeliers, drawings and pictures by Vanloo and Boucher.

When young Fragonard started for Italy in 1756, Boucher's parting advice was: "If you take Rome in earnest, you are lost." Until then the apprentice's conceptions and their outcome had been a reflex of his master's style, witness the pair before us. Even contemporary engravers must have been deceived by the affinity, for the first state of both plates bears Boucher's name. By hiding the letters and looking at the arrangement and expression of either pastoral scene, the characteristic mannerisms of the first painter of Louis XV speak out; while, as both are Frago's own compositions, their decorative effect and broad treatment show that the pupil at twenty-four years of age had nothing more to learn in Paris, while a visit to Italy would help him to unlearn something and to find rather than to lose himself.

The original "Bascule" in the possession of Baron de Sinéty and the "Colin-Maillard" now in the Groult collection had been commissioned by Mr. de St. Julien, the amateur who a few years later was to elicit from the same brush yet another swing, the world-famous "Escarpolette."

Though doggerels for prints were seldom if ever signed, "J. B. A. S. fecit" is inscribed under the following lines on "la Bascule": "No sooner do we step out "of bashful childhood, love already meddles with our games. . . ." The rhyme under "Colin-Maillard" is meaningless.[1]

"La Bascule" has also been lithographed.

[1] Littré gives the following etymology for the quaint old French name equivalent to blind-man's-buff: "Colin, a man's name in a generic sense; Maillard, from the mallet held by the blind warrior of a Walloon "legend in his valiant fight."

145.

MA CHEMISE BRÛLE

Engraved by Auguste-Claude-Simon Legrand in 1789

First state.

SOON after 1780, and as the Revolution drew near, even artists were bitten with a mania for haste. The burin being slow and expensive to handle, line engravers welcomed the expeditious process of the stipple, through which they could more easily complete their work and obtain soft shadows, especially on the flesh. With more skill than genius, Bartolozzi adopted this mixed manner on a large scale, until he worked whole plates on a system of innumerable dots, more or less marked and detached. Though it was possible thus to reproduce the *morbidezza* of the finest drawings, no stippler could overcome the inherent feebleness of dotted outlines, and unless the process was handled with particular skill it lapsed into insipidity. In his essay on eighteenth-century prints published in the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" of 1889, Portalis, who professes a scanty admiration for stippling, quotes "Ma chemise brûle" as one of the most estimable specimens of this technical evolution, although Legrand was by no means a craftsman of the first rank.

After dragging in a comparison with "la Chemise enlevée" (No. 146) merely because a nightgown is conspicuous in both compositions, Bourcard lays stress on the extreme rarity of the "Chemise on fire" in its first state, before the name of Mlle. Amable Irène des F. St. H. had been inserted on the *fleuron* by one Cupid, while another bids silence with his finger. The dedication of so informal a subject must have advertised the free and easy disposition of a young lady who, judging from the transparent initials, dwelt in the Faubourg St. Honoré and used her address as a title of distinction. The date of 1 January 1789 inscribed on later impressions suggests a New Year's present either from Fragonard or Legrand, who in this case signed "D. Furcy," or from the publisher Bonnet. Old hand-coloured impressions of the second state are frequently to be met with.

The original sepia drawing, one of the sensations of the de Chennevière sale in 1898, is now in the Camondo collection at the Louvre.

LA CHEMISE ENLEVÉE

By E. Guersant. After J. H. Fragonard

146.

LA CHEMISE ENLEVÉE

Engraved by E. Guersant in 1782

The etching, and first and second states.

GUERSANT was so little known as an engraver that Portalis is content with entering this print among the works of Massard, whose address is inscribed on the second state. The foreshortening on the woman's figure may be inaccurately reproduced, the Cupid imperfectly drawn, the texture of the shift itself deprived of its diaphanousness, yet the general effect of the aqua-fortis preparation is striking, and the superb oval border with its ormolu roses worthy of Cochin or Choffard. For an indifferent burinist the result appears to be all the more remarkable that the original picture dated 1781, now in the Lacaze room at the Louvre, is a typical example of the Master's sketchiness when, being more concerned with colour than with form, he shunned an elaborate finish.[1] With the evolution of his talent, Fragonard felt that too much work would spoil the spontaneity of his conceptions and too prim an outline might deprive a suggestive composition of the least and last pretence of decency. That in his opinion the same reservations did not apply to the brush and the burin is illustrated in this particular case by a careful drawing of "la Chemise enlevée," coloured in oils, which comes much nearer to Guersant's engraving, for which it was probably intended as a guide, than the painting at the Louvre. It also comes nearer to a replica treated by the Master in a more Rubenesque style than the first bold draft of the same scene, a replica once the property of Mr. Récipon, sold in 1907 at the Galerie Petit.

Cupid himself, whose torch is burning on the steps of the alcove, could not have devised a craftier trick to give the painter a chance of playing upon the whole gamut of fleshy roseate and pearly whites by unmasking a woman's beauty under a canopy. Since Fragonard had set himself the task of making modesty blush, how could one expect him to behave himself, or his lovers to be discreet, and such virtue as he depicted obdurate? On the feast of easy love he must depend for inspiration. As a patron taxed him with having relinquished historic subjects soon after the fair promise given by his "Callirhoe" at the Academy, he said: "When Nature cast me adrift on this world she warned me I would have to scrape "along as best I could: my instincts have followed the hint."

Edmund de Goncourt waxed fervid over the Lacaze picture: "The headiest of

"all the erotic compositions of this sketcher of genius who in a few strokes and "dashes could sum up the effect and meaning of a finished painting. . . . A sleepy "smile lingers on the woman's lips, on her closed eye the eyelashes cast a faint "shadow, her brown curls play in the hollow of the pillow. By instinct but "indolently she is prompted to hold with both hands the shift of which she is being "stripped. . . . A most poetic figure exquisitely swayed in the struggle with Cupid, "an almost classical conception of antique grace undraped, of modesty vanquished "in a dream by the knavish lad."

Wondering at the utter lack of information about Guersant, Delteil writes: "Add just *that* to it—a mere nothing—and his plate would be one of the best "among all the interpretations of Fragonard's works."

In the opinion of Bourcard, the attractiveness of the composition makes ample amends for the engraver's shortcomings. The same author wrote in 1893: "We have never come across this print in etching or proof state—a *very peculiar*, "very rare instance. According to our knowledge the 'Chemise enlevée' has "never turned up at any sale otherwise than with the letter."

Barathier in 1840 issued a reversed lithographic reproduction of the same subject.

[1] Mr. Lacaze was fond of relating how in the forties he picked up the sketch of "la Chemise" on a bookstall of the Place de la Bourse and gave one louis for it.

LE CHIFFRE D'AMOUR

By N. de Launay. After J. H. Fragonard

LE CARQUOIS D'AMOUR.

147.

LE CHIFFRE D'AMOUR

Engraved by Nicolas de Launay

Second and third states.
Coat of arms of Viscountess de Polastron d'Esparbes.

Portalis considers this print, "l'Escarpolette," "la bonne Mère," and "le Serment d'amour" as the four most remarkable prints after Fragonard by his favourite interpreter.

Probably the sentimental "As you like it" allegory of "le Chiffre," as old as Love itself in literature, was borrowed from Sir Joshua Reynolds's full-length of Mrs. Lloyd, known in France through Graves's line engraving. Whether original or not, its adoption by Fragonard was due to the suggestion of Count d'Artois, the King's brother, for the benefit of the lady to whom the picture was to be presented and the engraving dedicated as a votive offering.

In his youth the future Charles X, resenting the words of a song warbled by Queen Marie Antoinette about a woman's initials being more endurably impressed on the bark of a tree than on a man's heart, pledged himself to contradict all through life so rash a statement. Frivolous, dissipated, and weak as the man was, his devotion to Madame de Polastron, outlasting the vicissitudes of the Revolution, proved to be stronger than time or distance, to the sorrow of the much-neglected Countess d'Artois.[1]

The original very small picture, catalogued as "Souvenir" at the Morny sale in 1865 and purchased by Lord Hertford for £1,400, is now a disappointing attraction to French pilgrims in quest of unalloyed sensations at the Wallace Collection. According to de Goncourt the "Chiffre," always of a feeble quality in the Master's over-finished style, has through scouring and repainting been reduced, like "l'Escarpolette" to the condition of a posthumous Fragonard.

[1] Marie Louise d'Esparbes de Lessan (1764-1804), married at seventeen to Viscount de Polastron, "a soldier who could play the violin," was chaperoned and pushed on at Court by her influential sister-in-law, Countess de Polignac. Loving and passionate, she was not insensible to the persistent advances, the life-long devotion of Count d'Artois, whom she followed in exile from Italy to Germany, from London to Edinburgh. Worn away by consumption contracted in England, this pretty woman never lost her intense charm. She died in London and was buried there with a certain amount of solemnity. Count d'Artois wrote then: "There is no scope left for me on earth, no hope, no desire, not even any affection. She "enlivened for me everything: her death has broken all the bonds of my heart, my mind, and soul: *plus ne "m'est rien.*"

148, 149.

LE VERROU—LE CONTRAT

A pair engraved by Maurice Blot in 1784 and 1792 respectively

Second states.

DEVIATING somewhat from the highly artistic training of St. Aubin's *atelier*, BLOT (1753-1818), whom Edmond de Goncourt styles as Madame Blot, betrayed the mechanical handling of his or her tools on plates cross-hatched with symmetrical strokes. The prints before us, however, show more than an average fluency, and Portalis regards the "Verrou" as a crisp, agreeable interpretation.

The incongruity of the two subjects as a pair suggests the query: which ought to come first? Cynics might be inclined to begin with the "Verrou," while the fair-minded would sooner give precedence to the "Contrat." Yet, as on a wall of the room where "the Marriage settlement" takes place, "l'Armoire" (No. 137) and "le Verrou" have been minutely reproduced, their priority cannot be contested. Wary eighteenth-century dealers, who chose to offer "Settlement" and "Bolt" as companions, would leave it to the imagination of customers to see in the first a bridegroom elect promising to endow his wife with all his worldly goods and to accept the second as a sort of lawful rough and tumble "Enfin seuls" after the wedding reception, painted by a forerunner of realism who would only be guided by human documents in the artistic treatment of the facts of nature and life. Whatever may have been the publisher's discretion in assorting these prints, a look at the background of "le Contrat" leaves no doubt as to which the Master thought fit to pair. At all events, amateurs already familiar with the great aqua-fortis of "l'Armoire" could hardly mind the audacity of "le Verrou."

In the instinctive action of a young woman despairing of her powers of resistance, in the violent determination of a lover who by bolting the door deprives wavering virtue of a supreme chance, Fragonard found his most impassioned theme. La Reynière, Marquis de Veri, financier and fast liver,[1] had suggested it. The physique of the heroine of "le Verrou," her dress, and to some extent her attitude, remind one of the principal figure of the "Fuite à dessein" and of the "Baiser à la dérobée" (Nos. 154 and 142).

At the dispersion of the great de Veri collection in 1785, the original picture fetched 3,950 livres. Eight years before, at the Varanchon sale, a masterly pen-and-bistre drawing for it, the same which belongs now to Baron Ed. de Rothschild, had brought 800 livres. Another of a different size, sold in 1786, was probably that

LE VERROU

By M. Blot. After J. H. Fragonard

LE TERROR

LE CONTRAT

By M. Blot. After J. H. Fragonard

LE CONTRAT

"deliciously pale sketch" referred to by de Goncourt as the first conception of the subject, signed in full, which brought 4,500 francs at the Walferdin sale, 8,100 francs at the Josse sale, and 24,000 francs at the Beurdeley sale in 1905. For genuine inspiration, for an inborn aptitude to express movement more effectively than repose, Fragonard, the greatest improviser of all French painters, the supreme pyrotechnist of his time, found in his drawings a better outlet than in his pictures.[2] The confessions of an unrestrained nature seemed to come out more openly through the pencil than the brush; thence the attraction of some of the Master's creations as sketched on paper and occasionally etched on the copper, before they were fully developed or modified on canvas.

Besides the standard engraving by Blot, of which, as of "le Contrat," the original plate is still used for modern re-impressions, several adaptations of the "Verrou" were issued at the time; one in aquatint by de Campion, four printed in colours by Noipmancel, Mixelle, de Goux, and Guyot respectively, the first of them reversed in 4to, the third within a circle; an oval one with spandrils by Lebeau after a copy with a few alterations made by Binet in 1785, under the name of "Weak resistance": a seventh one in red without artists' names, probably by Audebert. A cheap hand-coloured counterfeit differing in many ways from the original and devoid of artistic merit was published as "The Bolt or the lovers' security" by Deny, rue des Mathurins.

While the "Verrou" betrayed no trace of foreign influence, the cold taste which suddenly favoured the imitation of minor Dutch masters showed itself by contrast in its respectable but ill-assorted companion, the "Contrat." Metsu's familiar fur-trimmed jacket made its appearance upon it, next to the glistening satin gown of Terburg, that everlasting gown soon to become the pride of Boilly's *genre* scenes. The print betrays also the over-finished, miniature-like manner so contrary to *bravura* and to sketchiness, that originality seems to sink under it. Were it not for the subtlety of individual expression on the two figures represented, the name of Mlle. Gérard (No. 180) might be whispered before a mild composition which pitches a desultory note in the stirring symphony of Fragonard.

The original picture was shown in 1874 at the Exhibition organized in favour of the emigrants from Alsace-Lorraine. Unlike the "Verrou," which had appealed to so many engravers, there was, besides Blot's print, only another and a smaller interpretation of the "Contrat" in colours by Guyot.

[1] The magnificence of his residence in the rue de Verneuil was enhanced by a collection of contemporary pictures, among which were "la Cruche cassée," "la Malédiction," "le Fils puni," by Greuze, now at the Louvre. The catalogue of his sale mentions besides "l'Amour et la Folie" (Nos. 201-2) an "Adoration of the shepherds," "that sublime scene of a devotional character commissioned by the great "art patron to Fragonard."

[2] Collectors of drawings, whose number had increased at the time of Louis XV under the influence of Mariette, were already in dread of trickeries. At an auction in 1789 the buyer of two pencil sketches by Fragonard demanded a certificate of authenticity signed by the Master himself before paying for them.

150.

LA COQUETTE FIXÉE

Engraved by Jacques Couche and Jean Dambrun

First and second states.
Coat of arms of the Marquis de Boisandré.

THE original picture has not been traced; a slightly tinted sketch for it in *grisaille* was once in the Walferdin collection. Although modern critics would undervalue the master in favour of the pupil, to the pink and blue palette of Boucher must ever be traced the prevailing manner of Fragonard, to whom it was given, however, to put southern raciness into the semi-pastoral, semi-mythological themes of his training and to disturb the statics of a conventional arrangement. As the "Coquette," strongly redolent of Boucher in her very fixity, preceded no doubt this evolution, she should be classed, next to the "Bascule" and "Colin-Maillard," before the "Fuite à dessein" (Nos. 143, 144, 154). The interest of Fragonard's mission in French art, as revealed by stages in his engraved works, has escaped Bourcard, who attaches little importance to the fine plate before us prepared by Couché, finished with the burin of Dambrun.

No impression of the etching appears to have been preserved.

LA COQUETTE FIXÉE

By J. Couché and J. Dambrun. After J. H Fragonard

151.

LA CULBUTE

Engraved by FRANÇOIS PHILIPPE CHARPENTIER

Second state.

CHARPENTIER (1734-1817), an engraver with a turn for invention, simplified the mode of etching on copper known as aquatint by means of a mechanical appliance, thus coming into conflict with Floding, a Swede, who contested the authorship. The Academy, however, gave judgement in his favour and rewarded him with the privilege of quarters at the Louvre and a pension from the King. According to La Chavignerie the experiments of Charpentier to arrive at the imitation of drawings in indian ink preceded those of Le Prince, who enjoys the reputation of being the father of aquatint, while François should be looked upon as the grandfather of it.

The print before us is often quoted as the best result achieved with an expeditious but not very artistic process. Edmond de Goncourt, who owned the original bistre drawing, now in the collection of Mr. Gaston Meunier, mentions the engraving as a perfect facsimile of the same size. Portalis wrote: "the "passionate group of a farm boy and a girl in 'la Culbute' must have been com- "posed in the heat of inspiration, so as to carry the spectator away with the "draughtsman in his onrush."

152, 153.

LA FONTAINE D'AMOUR—LE SONGE D'AMOUR

A pair engraved by Nicolas François Regnault

First states.

CREATED on purpose to portray the fiery frenzies of youth, Fragonard takes no interest in dumb novels such as Greuze doted on: with him no action ever drags. Sappho alone, had she been a lyric painter, could have found lines and colour to give vent to her feelings with such passionate determination.

Both "Dream" and "Fountain" display in the same ethereal gamut the *morbidezza* of which the Master held the secret when concentrating his light on the principal group of a composition. Both might be apparitions emerging from semi-darkness. On a classical couch a Roman slumbers; his attitude is Virgilian; next to his helmet and shield, on the steps below, sleeps the Cupid who has disarmed him. From the gloaming rises a sort of Jacob's ladder of Amorini supporting the ideal beauty who has alighted from Olympus to lend the consistency of reality to the fancies of a warrior. The flowers scattered by the babes seem to wither, the flames of their torches to wane, before the radiance of Aphrodite. The goddess, the rosy little gods, the fire-tinted clouds, all stand out, move, and come forward within a dazzling mist. Hasten your glance, or the vision will fade away.

The dream vanishes, the scene changes, but the day has not yet dawned; a stormy night of mystery still weighs on the sombre trees, on heavily scented groves. Running against the wind, a young man and a young woman, enwreathed with roses, step on the brink of an inexhaustible fountain. Breathless, with burning eyes, with parched lips, the lovers stretch the thirst of their senses to the enchanted cup held by frolicking Cupids who dip limbs and wings in the limpid elixir. The water overflows from the marble basin, a silvery haze rises from it. Everywhere are little Loves half drenched, half lost in the surging vapours, Loves beaming with light, Loves on whose back a shower of pearly drops breaks from the rushing stream. The universe might crumble and not divert the rapture, nor quench the desire of this couple.

With all the prestige of its luminosity, the composition of the "Songe," more elaborate and less spontaneous than the "Fontaine," was likened by Diderot to an omelet of Cupids beaten up and fried overnight. A sketch for it—or was it the picture?—fetched 100 livres in 1786 at the de Cène sale. After passing within recent

LA FONTAINE D'AMOUR

By N. F. Regnault. After J. H. Fragonard

LE SONGE D'AMOUR

By N. F. Regnault. After J. H. Fragonard

years through the Marcille, the Burat, and the Seillière collections, the original canvas rests now in the Schlichting room at the Louvre.

In 1796, at the dispersion of the pictures of Duclos Dufrenoy, courtier and amateur, "la Fontaine," which had been commissioned by him, was knocked down for 37,600 livres in assignats at the rate of two livres per hundred. It was probably the same version of the composition which belonged many years afterwards to Mr. Walferdin, at whose sale it brought 12,500 francs, unless it was the one in the possession of Lady Holland at Stanmore Castle, of which all trace, somehow, seems lost. A smaller replica, mentioned in 1810 in the catalogue of Villeminot, a navy paymaster, and sold again for 221 francs in 1846 at the Saint sale, was one of Sir Richard Wallace's many purchases from the San Donato collection in 1880, when it fetched 31,510 francs. Yet another replica[1] of "la Fontaine," with slight alterations, belongs to Mr. Paillard of gastronomic fame. The sketch for it turned up in 1889 at the Berend sale, when Mr. Bernstein bought it for 4,500 francs and loaned it rather anachronously to the Exhibition of "Fine Arts at the opening of the XIXth Century" held in May 1891.

"Love's dream," as interpreted by Regnault's soft stipple, went through four states—the first of which was mentioned by Bourcard as rare—but tempted no other engraver; while "Love's fountain" was reproduced by the same process in smaller size, reversed and hand coloured by Audebert.

Rather sweepingly Delteil condemns as equally clumsy the plates of the "Verrou" and the "Contrat," of "ma Chemise brûle," of the "Fontaine" and "Songe d'amour." Owing to lack of suppleness and intuition on the part of the engravers, he finds it hard to recognize Fragonard's painting upon them: "most of the Master's interpreters on the copper did no more know how to "transpose his play of light and his nimbleness, his fancy, and his wit than to "convey the nervous and throbbing qualities of his drawing, or his warm and "delicately shaded colours. As a result some of his alluring scenes have either "been turned into flat prints, or else made to look like ultra-classic compositions, "on which we obtain but a few exceptional glimpses of the charm and distinction "of the originals."

[1] *Repetition* and *replica* are technical terms not to be indiscriminately used. The first applies to an exact copy of the original: the second to a copy of a different size, generally smaller, or otherwise modified and altered; both, of course, by the artist himself.

154.

LA FUITE À DESSEIN

Engraved by Charles François Adrien Macret and Jacques Couché in 1783

Two impressions: the etching and the second state.
Coat of arms of the Marquise de Turpin de Cressé.

Macret (1751-1789), a pupil of Aliamet and of G. de St. Aubin, managed to avoid in the interpretation of colours the acridity for which the craftsmen working, like himself, under the arbitrary direction of Greuze, were to blame. His "Offrande à l'amour," after that master, is thus commented upon in the curious "Letters of an English traveller": "It would be difficult to say whether the "Cupid introduced on the scene is meant to be of marble or of bronze, or if he be "not intended for some brat of Savoy who has climbed on a pedestal to tease the "nymph." Portalis quotes "la Fuite" as Macret's finest etching; the impression before us came from the Mühlbacher collection.

The print was finished by Couché, who engraved also its companion, "la petite Thérèse" after Caresme (No. 58).

The original picture in the Master's over-finished style belongs to Baron A. de Rothschild in Vienna. Its subject, derived from two lines of Ovid, was suggested to Fragonard by Mr. l'Homme, a classic scholar: "Cunningly pretending "to disappear in the woods, the amorous maid turns round, anxious to be looked "at and pined for over and over again." [1]

The date of 1770 or thereabouts is assigned by Portalis to several compositions for which the Master used the same model as for the panels which were to decorate Mme. du Barry's pavilion at Louveciennes. There is, no doubt, a likeness between the heroine of "la Poursuite," one of the quadruple set of Grasse celebrity, and the pert looks, the lissom figure of the "Coquette fixée," who reappears in the "Baiser à la dérobée," in "le Verrou," and in this "Fuite à dessein" (Nos. 150, 142, 149).

[1] The Greek Anthology has the following epigram by Archias: "In vain do I endeavour to escape "from Love; while I walk, he flies."

LES HAZARDS HEUREUX DE L'ESCARPOLETTE

By N. de Launay. After J. H. Fragonard

LES HEUREUX DE L'ESCARPOLETTE

155.

LES HAZARDS HEUREUX DE L'ESCARPOLETTE

Engraved by NICOLAS DE LAUNAY in 1767;
the *fleuron* by CHOFFARD

The etching and the second state.

BESIDES two etchings, one slightly more advanced than the other, Portalis quotes five finished states of de Launay's *chef-d'œuvre*:

1. Before title, *fleuron*, and dedication; with the inscription in scratched letters: "peint par Fragonare—wrong spelling—gravé par de Launay."

2. With a *fleuron* and the word "escarpolette" in the title spelt with a final s.

3. With the dedication, with the painter's name correctly spelt; with the mention "Académie des beaux arts" instead of "des arts" after "de Launay"; the word "escarpolette" still erroneously spelt.

4. Without the mistake in the spelling.

5. Where the plate having been altered to an oval, with spandrils and a shaded tablet, was paired with "la bonne Mère."

As the large size paper needed in this case was originally folded in the middle, the margins invariably show a fold on a level with the right foot of the young woman on the swing.

The subject was eventually erased from the plate to make room for a composition after David; one of the many instances of the deliberate obliteration of some of the choicest eighteenth-century engravings perpetrated under the First Empire and as late as 1850 for the sake of the impersonal and stilted compositions then in vogue.

Bourcard goes to the trouble of enumerating the states of a modern reproduction of the same "lucky chances" with and without orthographic mistakes, adding more in sorrow than in anger: "thus many buyers are let in."

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As some of de Launay's finished prints attain very nearly the distinction of the joint work of Moreau and Simonet, so the etching of "l'Escarpolette" takes rank by the general consent of collectors immediately after those of "le Couché de la mariée" and "le Modèle honnête" (Nos. 9 and 27). This great engraving was

dedicated to the Master by his favourite interpreter, "his servant and friend," who with characteristic refinement committed to Choffard the drawing and execution of the *fleuron*, a madrigal in itself, bearing besides the entwined initials H.F. lighted up by the torch of Love, the title of Fragonard's masterpiece as an aquafortist: "l'Armoire." No compliment from one great etcher to another could have been better thought out: "Arcades ambo," de Launay and he.

As for Choffard, the unrivalled specialist of so-called accessories to a plate, despite the customary anonymity of such contributions, he inscribed his name on the exquisite tail-piece. The print met with an unprecedented demand. De Launay's mastery had asserted itself upon it as on his best interpretations of Baudouin, by imparting to the operatic grove of "the Swing" a sense of open air and space lacking in the original, and by showing less consideration for the Boucher tradition than the painter himself had done in that tight, over-finished manner of his from which thenceforth he was to depart.[1]

Although the colouring on the small canvas was too cool and the general bluish tone too remote from the prevailing blonde and warm effect of the Master's first manner, yet the burin could not set off with equal contrast a wealth of foliage tinged with autumn's gold against the rose pinks of the young woman, a great butterfly on the wing. As for the imperceptible expression between pleasure and giddiness which Fragonard had given to her features, no point, no copper could quite catch and render it. Where is now that pretty pouting on the picture itself? Vanished in the way familiar to restorers.

❖ ❖ ❖

The genesis of the composition is typical of the period. Under the date of October 1766, Collé[2] wrote in his memoirs: "Would you believe it? A few days "after Doyen, the specialist of altar-pieces, had exhibited at the Salon his "'St. Geneviève des Ardents,' a Court official sent for him and asked to be painted "half concealed in a flowery bush, watching his mistress on a swing set in motion "by a bishop. Wondering whether a commission so unsuited to his style were "meant as a joke, Doyen suggested, by way of improvement, that one of the lady's "slippers sent flying into the air should be caught by Cupids. While declining to "undertake the work himself, he felt sure Mr. Fagonat [*sic*] would successfully do "so." Collé adds that the latter, a fashionable *genre* painter, not an *ascete*, had started on so singular a task when considerations of propriety induced the Court official to be satisfied with a husband of good composition to hold the swing instead of a bishop: "the amateur's intentions after all are sure to be made "sufficiently clear, even though the supers of the comedietta be purposely thrown "into the shade."

With such concessions to appearances, Fragonard carried out his instructions,

leaving it to the happy chances of a primitive sport to tantalize a lover in the grass with the rustle, the swaying, and sweeping of pink silks and creamy lace. The aerial, the winsome creature, merrily tossed 'twixt light and shade, is the symbol of pleasure, a vision of heedless youth in its flower, and the licence taken is saved from being offensive by an air of fantastic unreality. From the loud success of the picture and the immediate popularity of the print dates the acknowledged leadership of Fragonard as limner of easy love over the *galant* art of the latter years of Louis XV and throughout the reign of Louis XVI. Boucher's mantle and sceptre had devolved upon him; he became the mirror of a fast set of noblemen and financiers, of friends of du Barry, opera stars, and royal hangers-on, for whose sake he conjured up a fairy land where nothing could be considered improper.

The first presentment of "l'Escarpolette," now in the Wallace Collection, sold in 1788 with the collection of Baron St. Julien, turned up again in 1865 at the sale of the Duc de Morny, "when Lord Hertford bought for 30,200 francs what was "left of that picture, under the scouring, repainting and daubing which have turned "it into a downright stock-jobber's copy," as affirmed by de Goncourt, not a negligible expert.[3]

There can be no doubt that de Launay's engraving was drawn from a replica of the original, now in the possession of Baron E. de Rothschild, with which it agrees in every detail, save for the feathers added to the lady's hat, a trifling alteration as a set-off against the foliage. Moreover, the print is a reverse of that replica. The "Escarpolette" belonging to the Duc de Polignac, painted lengthwise, differs in many ways from the other two. Mr. Walferdin had a small sketch for the first composition.

[1] Having gravely discovered that "Fragonard with all his lightness and charm was above Baudouin "and Lavreince, who depended above all on the *esprit galant* of their subjects," the English author of a preface to "French Line Engravings of the XVIIIth Century" begs to differ from everybody else on the subject of "l'Escarpolette" as he does on that of Moreau's etching of the "Couché de la mariée" (see note 5 to No. 9). According to him "de Launay attempted something beyond his powers and fell short, the "Swing having lost much in the translation . . . a trifle hard, unsympathetic, lacking the master hand of its "originator. . . . Yet the composition of the picture remains, the drawing is fine. . . ." The condescension of the latter admission in favour of de Launay is remarkable.

[2] COLLÉ (1709-1783), a dramatic author, whose "Vérité dans le vin" achieved a certain amount of success.

[3] What a damper on the inordinate enthusiasm inspired by the "Escarpolette" into average visitors to Hertford House.

156, 157.

LES JETS D'EAU—LES PÉTARDS

A pair engraved by Pierre Laurent Auvray

Early proofs.

Auvray (1736-?), a pupil of L. Cars, is chiefly remembered as the engraver of a pair of prankish scenes where two trios of unsuspecting maidens are roused in their sleep by the crackers exploding and the water squirting through the ceiling and floor of their respective bedrooms. Fragonard delighted, no doubt, in the rough practical jokes favoured in his day, which would be apt to cast an indiscreet light upon the limbs of young women thrown into heedless attitudes in the endeavour to escape, or to lay hold of a sheet, or to ascertain whence come the flashes and the deluge. The six tall and slender figures represented do not betray, as usual, the influence of Boucher, but rather point to the new standard of feminine beauty, as advocated on marble by Falconet and by Moreau le Jeune in his drawings.

By accentuating the original outlines, as if the pictures given him to interpret were highly finished, the engraver has obliterated an intentional sketchiness for which even Mrs. Grundy might have made allowances.

A sale catalogue of 1777 describes the drawing for the second composition as "quite frisky": a drawing, by the way, which was sold again the following year. The St. Julien collection, dispersed in 1788, included two different sepias of the "Jets d'eau"; one which turned up at the Behague sale in 1877, the other at the Sardou sale in 1909, when it fetched 10,600 francs.

Bourcard calls the attention of collectors to the rarity of this pair of prints before letters and borders. Later re-impressions exist, one of them reversed and labelled *à Paris chez Alibert*. Under the rubric of "Nuit de noce," both were reproduced in red—"à la sanguine"—without artists' names.

158, 159.

LE POT AU LAIT—LE VERRE D'EAU

A pair engraved by Nicolas Ponce

The second state of the first and the first state of the second.

THE master who delighted in La Fontaine's tales and fables, of which he considered himself the instinctive illustrator, often went for subjects to that "Idle boy" of Louis XIV literature. He gave such an appropriate personification of the poetically human "Pot au lait" that the rustic subject became, if possible, as popular in the picture as in the text. Perrette going to market builds all sorts of castles in the air with the proceeds of the milk she is about to sell, what she will save, what she will buy. Her can is upset, the milk spilt, and Perrette's plans, her prospective farm, cattle, sheep, and poultry vanish in the clouds. Two shepherds laugh at the girl in her distress.

Portalis deprecates prudery, if one is to turn over the leaves of Fragonard's engraved works. As an excuse in favour of the painter, he holds Ponce responsible for certain audacities upon which the burin has insisted more than the brush: "The tactful impression of a mere sketch has thus been turned into a "suggestive drawing, and the harmless wit of the original injured or misinterpreted. "Too literal a translation is apt to disregard light touches and of mere jests make "broad jokes for old rakes."

This neat apology is put to a severe test, regardless of the corresponding print, by the original of the "Verre d'eau," once in the Mühlbacher collection. With it the Master gave far more than a sketch. From a border put in simply as a guidance for the engraver, from a background slashed with bitumen and from boldly dashed curtains the sprawling form of a woman stands out and shines as if carefully buttered; the impasto laid upon it being thicker and more polished than on any other undraped figure by the same hand.

As a compensation the "Pot au lait," painted on parchment and never intended by Fragonard as a companion to the "Glass of water," was indeed one of his sketchiest works. In 1780 it fetched 110 livres among the objects of "*art, bigotry*,[1] and *virtu*" belonging to Prault, the publisher of the "Ovid" and the "Monument du costume." It was sold again in the first years of the nineteenth century for 1 fr. 55 cent. at the sale of the *atelier* of Ponce, the engraver, where, notwithstanding the ridiculous bid, no doubts could be raised as to the authenticity

of the lot itself, a lot for which 13,000 francs were given in 1909, at the dispersion of the Doistau collection.

The finished state of "le Verre d'eau," with the title before the engraver's address described by Bourcard as first, is evidently later than the impression with the white tablet before all letters in this collection.

[1] The word occurs in the title-page of the Prault sale catalogue.

S'IL M'ÉTOIT AUSSI FIDÈL

By L. Dennel After J. H. Fragonard

160.

S'IL M'ÉTOIT AUSSI FIDÈL

Engraved by Louis Dennel

First state.
Coat of arms of Mr. Von de St. Pierre.

THE pathetic look cast by this young woman on her little dog, whose devotion is a standing reproach to an absent friend, so impresses Portalis and Beraldi that instead of expatiating on the work of DENNEL (1741-1806), a pupil of Beauvarlet, they dwell on the heartache and pangs implied by an interjectional title where the omission of the final *e* of *fidèle* may be debited to the emotion of the publisher.

The autograph signatures of Fragonard and of the engraver on the impression before us show it to have been a presentation proof; the collector's mark on the back of it—apparently "A.F."—coincides with that on "la Rose mal défendue" in this collection, and has not been identified.

In 1776 Saint Non, the painter's earliest patron in Italy, aquatinted the same subject with some slight changes and in a smaller size. The original sepia drawing touched up with *gouache*, which at the Goncourt sale fetched 1,500 francs, was knocked down in 1911 for 24,000 francs at the Decourcelle sale.

161-165.

DITES DONC S'IL VOUS PLAÎT—LE PETIT PRÉDICATEUR

LES BAIGNETS—L'ÉDUCATION FAIT TOUT

L'HEUREUSE FÉCONDITÉ

A set of five engraved by Nicolas de Launay between 1777 and 1791

First state of the first print; first and third states of the second; the etching and second state of the third; the etching and first state of the fourth; second state of the fifth.

The "Prédicateur" and "l'Éducation" have the monogram and arms of Mr. and Mme. Blondel; the "Baignets" has the coat of arms of Mme. du Plaa; the "Fécondité" has that of Cochin, Keeper of the King's Drawings and Prints.

THE "domestic works" of Fragonard date back from the time when his own home supplied him with sitters as the light and merriment of chastened compositions. No Frenchman has better understood or more happily rendered the soft indecision of outline on the forms of infants showing through their scanty chemises the limbs of chubby Cupids closely related to Boucher, and having nothing in common with the demureness of Chardin's girls and boys.

The baby intimidated by the injunction to say "please" before he gets his slice of bread; the baby perched on a chest, holding forth like a little St. John; the baby topping a pyramid of children who watch and wait for the fritters; the grown-up sister teaching two dogs to play tricks to the delight of seven tiny tots; these four scenes, caught alive by the most observant of artists, may be traced to "la bonne Mère," a picture which in Diderot's opinion favoured the expansion of the birth-rate and would lead to the "heureuse Fécondité," or "la Famille du fermier" (Nos. 167, 168), wherein are summed up a painter's reformed habits and his paternal happiness.

Subjects that brought fresh success to Fragonard enhanced still further the reputation of de Launay, who, in the interpretation of every scene, kept the main motive always but not too insistently prominent, leaving a mass of delicate details in the proper perspective. Each oval composition is encompassed within the most perfectly devised and balanced borders that ever heightened the decorative value

LE PETIT PRÉDICATEUR

By N. de Launay. After J. H. Fragonard

of eighteenth-century prints, showing that the best artists of the day were not above helping each other. Originality to some extent may have been stifled through a collaboration without which otherwise no such level of excellence could have been reached. Who composed, who translated on copper the wonderful ornamentation intended to set off the rustic character of this famous quintette we shall never know for certain, since an unfair professional etiquette prevented as a rule the specialists of such additional work to write their names next to those of the other two artists under the finished state. But as Choffard himself was at times content to act merely as "print illustrator" by drawing and engraving borders for the plates of other engravers—as shown on a trial proof of the borders for the "Toilette" after Baudouin (No. 21) bearing his name—every one of the superb frames surrounding the five compositions before us might well be attributed to him. Far from a foregone conclusion this, or one merely suggested by the quality of the work, it finds ample support in the very signature of Choffard on the beautiful *fleuron* under the "Petit prédicateur," a signature which had appeared years before on the *fleuron* under "l'Escarpolette" (No. 155) after Fragonard by de Launay. Whatever the custom, the eminent vignettist was not always willing to be eclipsed.

At a sale in 1795 the original picture of "Dites donc s'il vous plaît," the first lesson of good manners imparted before luncheon to a little boy who was to turn up again in the character of "Petit prédicateur," fetched 4,446 livres in *assignats* or paper currency. It belongs now to Count Pillet-Will. Of three masterly drawings of the same subject, two in sepia, another in bistre, differing slightly from each other, de Launay had used for his plate one which Edmond de Goncourt bought in 1859 for 142 francs at the Villot sale. Unlettered impressions before the coat of arms of the Marquise d'Ambert are so rare that Portalis mentions as first the state before letters but with the arms. As early as 1775 a large engraving of "You should say please," printed in colours in the manner of Gautier-Dagoty, hap been published anonymously.

The picture of the "Prédicateur" sold by the painter to Aubert, the Court jeweller, is mentioned in the catalogue of de Launay's sale in 1792. The baby preacher holding a doll, who entertains the whole family with his prattle, was "Fanfan" or Alexander Fragonard, who, under his father's tuition or in spite of it, became an indifferent painter, a formal illustrator of French history.[1] The young fellow acting as prompter was his uncle, the brother of Marguerite Gérard. The text of a gibberish sermon, typical of the classical parodies of the time, is easily readable on the print: "Sermoni, sermona, ma chemise entre mes bras, mon "bonnet sur mes cheveux, en disant préface Messieurs, j'entrai dans mon cabinet.

"J'y vis la mort qui rôtissait; je lui demandais un la. . . . Elle m'a donné cent "coups de bâton. Est-ce bien fait ma *Maire*? Oui, grosse bête."

Bourcard refers to the first state of the "Baby preacher" as rare and mentions a lithograph of it by Gilliaux in reverse.

The original of the "Fritters," with its ten children waiting for the feast, was also in the possession of de Launay. A sepia drawing of it fetched 1,540 francs at the Walferdin sale in 1880 and 2,000 francs at the Lion sale six years later. Only on the fourth state of the print the mistake in the spelling of "baignets" was rectified into "beignets." The etching is very rare.

For breadth, freedom of execution, and life-likeness the picture, "l'Éducation fait tout" in the collection of Mr. Walter Burns, is a most striking work. A sepia drawing of it fetched 3,000 francs, one of the longest prices of the Walferdin sale.

The fact that Betta Cecchi and Eredi engraved for the Italian market, one the "Prédicateur," the other "l'Éducation," suggests to de Goncourt the remark that young Fragonard must have left behind a considerable reputation in Rome, Naples, and Venice, if there was a demand for the reproduction of his popular compositions when French art attracted but little attention on the other side of the Alps.

A jollier group than "l'heureuse Fécondité," where each child claims his share of caresses, each trying to climb on the mother's lap, could not be conceived; unfortunately it is not known where the original picture now is. The catalogue of the de Cène sale in 1786 mentions a drawing for it which had been interpreted by de Launay fourteen years before Marillier and Romanet worked at the same subject on a larger scale under the title of "la Famille du fermier" (No. 168). The coat of arms inserted under the plate does away with the supposition advanced by an English critic that rather than to Choffard the exquisite borders of the whole set may be due to Cochin. Had the great draughtsman collaborated in this instance with de Launay, he would not have accepted the dedication of their joint work.

In the list of his own prints de Launay entered "l'heureuse Fécondité," "le bonheur du Ménage," "la Gaieté conjugale," "la Félicité villageoise," the second after Leprince, the last two after Freudenberger, as a quadruple set.

The collector's mark on the back of the impression of "la Fécondité" before us is either that of the Bayard or the Berard collections, sold respectively in 1891 and 1892. Their "C.B." or "G.B." within a circle often lead to a *quid pro quo*, while both stamps vouch for quality.

Of every one of the five engravings the old copper-plates exist and are used for reprints, upon which the pristine delicacy has become obliterated.

[1] At the Fragonard exhibition held at Nice in January 1907, a sepia drawing illustrating the life of Henry IV and labelled without the Christian name of Alexander would deceive nobody but the owner, Mr. Camille Blanc of Monte Carlo fame.

166.

L'INNOCENCE INSPIRE LA TENDRESSE

Engraved by Étienne Claude Voysard

Second state.
Coat of arms of (?).

Voysard (1746-?), a pupil of Baron and a *protégé* of Count d'Artois, is principally known as one of the engravers of the decorative works of Delafosse, the architect, issued in 1768 and, ten years later, of Ranson's fine models of furniture, vases, trophies, and cartouches, published by Esnauts and Rapilly, who employed him also on their "Galerie des modes." He contributed under Couché to the illustration of the "Galerie du Palais Royal," and interpreted, among a few good portraits, those of Boileau after Forty, of Palissot after Monnet, of Mirabeau after Borel.

That Voysard deserved the praise bestowed upon him by Wille is shown by the commission given him to engrave one of those domestic pictures by Fragonard, over five of which the burin of de Launay had been astonishingly graphic and brilliant (Nos. 161-165). The fine borders of "l'Innocence" correspond exactly with the ornamentation round that famous set. Leaving all comparisons aside, the work on this print is creditable; modern reimpressions of it are mentioned by Bourcard.

167.

LA BONNE MÈRE

Engraved by Nicolas de Launay in 1779

The etching before the spandril and the second state.
Coat of arms of Mr. Ménage de Pressigny.

With this etching de Launay opened the series of his masterly interpretations of the so-called domestic works of Fragonard.

After years of unremitting good living, when he had been the very soul of the jollities of his friends and patrons, "Frago," at forty, weary of excitement and pleasure, longed for a steadier life and a fireside of his own. In the new role of Benedick, in a sedate atmosphere, the choice of his subjects underwent a change in favour of genuine domesticity without soft sentimentality. Impelled by paternal complacence, he took to illustrating on canvas the joys and cares of his young wife who, besides tending and fondling their three babies, brought up with them her own little brother and sister. The Master would plant his easel in the garden by the side of a cradle among the rose-bushes, or in the kitchen where the romping sitters, dragging in the dog and the cat as playmates, posed for him unconsciously. Full of child-like humanity and charm, these ever-changing groups, drawn, painted, and engraved, might have been tossed on the knees of Fragonard. Simplicity and directness of purpose distinguish their treatment from that of similar subjects by Greuze.

Two different dedications mark the gulf of the Revolution between the early and late states of "la bonne Mère," showing how with the demolition of the old order of things, artists beheld the ruin of former patrons. The popularity of this print was by no means threatened, for if David as Fine Arts dictator condemned the pastorals of Boucher as well as the suggestive or aristocratic scenes of Baudouin and Lavreince, he would approve of a subject prompted by Rousseau's injunctions that mothers should nurse their children. Only as it became imperative to obliterate the inscription to Ménage de Pressigny, since all Farmers-General were to be treated as extortioners, Fragonard and de Launay, in their anxiety to keep on the safe side, substituted for the name of a royalist Mæcenas that of the land of liberty, "la Patrie," who was to starve them both by inches, as the exponents of a superannuated style.

The original picture, a small work, superb in colour, pure and luminous in

quality, turned up under the Second Empire at the sale of Mme. Gorman, a dealer in obsolete bric-à-brac. It found its way eventually into the d'Aubigny collection, was shown at the exhibition of "one hundred masterpieces" in 1892, and is now in the United States. De Launay's copper-plate is still in use at the Louvre Chalcography. At least four minor craftsmen reproduced the same composition with certain alterations. There is an engraving of it in octavo without artists' names; Audebert and de Gouy respectively printed it in a smaller size in colours, and a third colour print of it in the manner of Dagoty was issued within a different oval.

When, in its last state, the square shape of the "Escarpolette" (No. 155) had been altered by spandrils, "la bonne Mère" was inappropriately advertised as its companion.

168.

LA FAMILLE DU FERMIER

Engraved by Clément-Pierre Marillier and Antoine Louis Romanet in 1791

Two progress proofs and the first state.

THE mention "Beauvarlet direxit" on some impressions points to the collaboration of Beauvarlet, who supervised the work, of Marillier who prepared the plate, and of Romanet who finished it.

A capital draughtsman of diminutive subjects, an excellent etcher, one of the most graceful eighteenth-century artists, MARILLIER (1740-1808) began by engraving monograms for Charles de St. Aubin. His lovely title-page for the "Bains de Diane" by Desfontaine, issued in 1770, prompted Grimm to write: "nowadays the worth of a poem is measured by its vignettes." A couple of *fleurons* contributed to the "Baisers," the *chef-d'œuvre* of Eisen, secured for him the illustration of Dorat's "Fables." It is difficult to decide which of the two types of small cuts that beautify both famous octavos bears away the palm; but if on the "Fables" Marillier vied with Eisen in grace and brio, he excelled him in the spirited treatment of twenty compositions for d'Arnaud's "Épreuves du sentiment." Commenting on the prodigious variety of the headings and tail-pieces designed by him "not as sterile ornaments since they enclose the morality of a "tale or something akin to it," the "Mercure de France" in June 1774 remarked that studied lack of space never crippled his inventiveness. His borders and frames are perfect models of the decorative style about to be called Louis XVI. If occasionally his touch looks finical, the fault may be imputed to such over-careful engravers as Longueil, de Ghendt, Masquelier, and Née, for his sepia drawings are rather broadly handled. Otherwise, if ever he trespassed on wider ground, if for the sake of a sketch of ordinary size he forsook daintiness and miniature work, Marillier was clearly out of his element and lacked unity.

It is a trite statement among book lovers that without such exquisite vignettes the literature of Dorat would have been utterly discredited. To some extent that master of affectation and pretty conceits may have realized it himself, for he inserted in "les Étrennes d'Apollon" for 1789 his thanksgiving to "the competitor of "Cochin, the rival of Gravelot": "I supplied a few sketches, you turn them into

"pictures. My animals, the offspring of art, are restored by you to nature. La "Fontaine is dead for long, but Oudry with you comes to life again. . . ."

After describing his copy of Dorat's "Fables" with all the *fleurons* separately printed and both title-pages before letters, Mr. Beraldi remarks: "if the reader is "no book lover, he cannot conceive what effort the making up of such a copy "represents. It is the thirteenth labour of Hercules."

Though not an accomplished draughtsman, ROMANET (1748-?) developed under the tuition of Wille a supple burin and engraved some fine portraits, besides several vignettes of Cochin. His best plates in two entirely different styles are the "Vierge d'Orléans" after Raphael and "la grande Toilette" for the third set of the "Monument du costume" (No. 334).

❖ ❖ ❖

The original picture of "la Famille du fermier" belonged to Fragonard's patron and friend, Bergeret, who after a severe illness presented it to Doctor Cochu. In the seventh Republican year it was sold with the collection of that eminent surgeon and found its way to Petrograd. When first exhibited at the Salon it deserved this mention: "a domestic scene in the best sense of the word, showing a "new phase of the painter's talent." Portalis sees in it the wholesome influence of married life, when the artist would not have far to go for baby models. The two eldest, Rosalie and Fanfan, of Polichinelle fame, sat for their father in this instance.[1]

De Launay interpreted the same subject in quarto under the title of "l'Heureuse Fécondité" (No. 164).

Both progress proofs bearing the stamp "G.B." come from the collection of Mr. G. Bayard, sold in 1891.

[1] The earliest portrait of Alexander Fragonard is "Monsieur Fanfan jouant avec Mr. Polichinelle et "sa Cie," etched in 1782 and bearing in the first state the joint signatures of Fragonard and Mlle. Gérard, although there is no doubt, as de Goncourt puts it, "that the whole work was the Master's personal "*grignotis*." A unique impression before letters was shown at the Fragonard exhibition of 1921.

169.

LE PETIT PARC

Etched by the Master

Only state.

HAVING given the pedigree of Fragonard's red chalk drawing of this identical composition, the Doucet sale catalogue expresses the opinion that "an "etching by Saint Non reproducing with an explicit title another aspect of the "same gardens justifies that of Villa d'Este adopted for the 'petit Parc.'" With due deference to the experts who described the Doucet collection, none of the etchings numbered 3, 4, and 5 in the "Recueil de Griffonis" by Saint Non, and entitled respectively "a view taken in the Villa d'Este gardens, a view of the "entrance to Tivoli and of the Villa d'Este buildings, another view of the Villa "d'Este gardens," correspond with the drawing reproduced in the Doucet catalogue and with this etching. On the other hand, an unsigned replica of the latter, apparently by Saint Non, but not included in the "Griffonis," and upon which the statue in the niche was omitted and the arrangement of the foreground somewhat modified by the insertion on either side of an old willow and of a large half-bare tree, bears no inscription to determine which small park may have thus been drawn, painted, and engraved.

As, however dilapidated, the Villa d'Este still stands and its general lines are practically unaltered, if writers on Fragonard find no time, were it only for sentiment's sake, to view the scene at Tivoli, they should compare this etching with the photographs taken on the spot. It will then be evident that the wide terrace of the "petit Parc," ornamented with statues and shaded by a huge bower of trees, has little in common with the ordnance of the balustrades, the cross walks, the narrow flights of steps, the countless water jets, the colossal cypresses grouped below, the unfinished palace rising above, all the natural and structural features, the tumbling-down landmarks of the Villa built in 1549 for Cardinal d'Este by Pirro Ligorio, the architect who dared to alter Michelangelo's plans for St. Peter.

No doubt because the Villa, one of the finest of the Renaissance, had long been held as a classic specimen of the Italian pleasance after which several patrician country seats were laid out, whenever the sketch of a formal garden by Fragonard turned up without any legend to identify it, the plausible and almost generic designation of Villa d'Este was resorted to in days less critical than ours. Indeed, if we consult the catalogue of the Wallace Collection, we find the picture corresponding with this etching entered under the name of "Villa d'Este gardens at Tivoli," an improvement upon that of "Gardens at Fontainebleau" which had been given to the same canvas when on loan at Bethnal Green. Yet everybody knows that, while spending the summer of 1760 at Tivoli, Fragonard and Hubert Robert did not permanently plant their easels in the ducal residence lent by the

Envoy of Modena to their host, the Abbé de Saint Non. Other gardens in Rome and at Frascati claimed their attention; gardens and parks laid out more or less in the same conventional style, but each presenting a distinct individuality according as nature had been allowed to interfere with art or art to infringe upon nature, or care and expenditure to check decay. Villa Pamphili, Villa Borghese, Villa Mattei, Villa Massimo, Villa Negroni, Villa Sachetti, Villa Aldobrandini, Villa di Papa Giulio, belong to a cycle of drawings by the two Academy pensioners known as "Italian villas" and including many more unnamed views of a similar character, among which "le petit Parc" stands pre-eminent.[1]

"It is to be regretted that Fragonard, a capital and, as the expression went, a "flavorous etcher, should not have turned to greater account this particular side "of his talent. In Italy he had been led to give Saint Non a few specimens of it "and to show him how to handle the view of a park, how to scatter hedges and "briers about with the needle. So remarkably did the Abbé benefit by the lesson, "that he copied that finely scratched little print, the petit Parc." By thus crediting Saint Non with a slightly modified and unsigned reproduction of the same etching, Portalis goes one step further than Baudicour, who is satisfied with the attribution to some anonymous copyist. Quite to the contrary, Goncourt recognizes the Master's touch upon it and has no hesitation in giving both versions to Fragonard: "hastily, on tiny plates, as if to pin impressions and memories in his scrap book, "Frago when in Italy engraved Tiepolo over and over again. Then, within the "space of a visiting card, he would sketch the garden of some deserted villa, a "dome of trees, thick shades pierced through by the sun, a terrace on which the "forlorn statue of a god sleeps undisturbed by the rustling foliage. Under the "entangled lines of his point, the diminutive landscape sparkles. Light and life "play through the overhanging boughs, 'twixt masses of herbs and weeds, along "the balustered slopes guarded by a pair of sphinxes."

A few small figures introduced in the foreground of the picture mark the only difference with the etching. The artist must have been well pleased with his composition, for, contrary to practice, he left two finished drawings of it. One of them, traced as far back as 1773 to the Lempereur sale, belonged for a time to Mr. Walferdin and until 1912 to Mr. J. Doucet; the other, entered in the Maherault sale catalogue of 1880, reappeared at the La Beraudière sale of 1885 and at the Beurdeley sale of 1905.

"Rarissime," says Bourcard of the etching. Fragonard scratched his name on the pedestal of the statue represented in the centre.

Delteil looks upon "le petit Parc" and "l'Armoire" as the most remarkable among the twenty-four plates due to the Master's skilled and spirited *grignotis*; each in its way as attractive in the ensemble as in every detail. Unfortunately, in the case of the "petit Parc," size interferes somewhat with the perfect beauty of the etching; the vista through trees and terraces being too wide for the space at the artist's command, even though Fragonard can afford such a drawback.

[1] Of twenty-one drawings of "Italian Villas" shown at the Fragonard Exhibition of 1921 at the Louvre, five reproduced various prospects of the Villa d'Este, two were views of Villa Negroni and Villa Pamphili; the others represented parks and gardens which await identification.

170.

LES TRAITANS

Etched by Fragonard in 1778

SUCH was the name given in the eighteenth century to shrewd men of business who, having undertaken by contract to collect the rates imposed on property and persons within certain districts, robbed almost openly the public treasury and "got rich quick."

According to Portalis it was said at the time that Fragonard had introduced in his composition the likeness of Thélusson, a banker in partnership with Necker. If a skit or a libel lurks between the lines of this unfinished etching, its title accounts for its rarity.

JEAN-MARTIAL FREDOU

171.

MARIE ANTOINETTE DE FRANCE

Engraved by Louis Jacques Cathelin in 1775

First state.
Coats of arms of the Houses of Bourbon and Hapsburg-Lorraine.

ALTHOUGH FREDOU (1711-1795) has been overlooked by amateurs, the time is coming, says Benezit, when his pictures and pastels will attract more attention. Portraits of the Duc de Bourgogne and the Comte de Provence at Versailles show him to have possessed the amiable characteristics of eighteenth-century art with a marked skill as a painter of accessories. That he was also a fair burinist is evidenced by the "Vieux débauché," a print after Eisen, signed with the obvious anagram of Voderf.

Messrs. Vaufiart and Bourin,[1] joint authors of an essay on the authentic portraits of Queen Marie Antoinette, weeded out with unprecedented discrimination, point out the close resemblance between the features, the look, the pose of the head, even the play of light on the print before us—the original of which is apparently lost—and a somewhat earlier picture attributed to the Viennese miniaturist Pencini, preserved at Schloss Laxemburg. The unconventional character of the latter, so rare on Court effigies, contributes to the reliability of a likeness which, if artistically deficient, presents a decided iconographic interest. Had Fredou seen it, and did he intentionally improve upon it, besides altering the dress and the ornaments? Count de Mercy Argenteau, whose letters furnish many particulars upon the daily life, the disposition, and even the personal appearance of Marie Antoinette, refers to the portrait by Fredou as being rather stiff: "the artist "had just missed the grace and charm of his sitter." The Empress Maria Theresa was not pleased with it: "she hardly recognized the Dauphiness, still less so the "French Queen." For, if Pencini painted his picture about 1773, Fredou must have executed his in 1774, the year of Queen Marie Antoinette's accession to the throne at the age of nineteen. The "Mercure de France" advertised the print in April 1775.

CATHELIN (1738-1804), a pupil of Lebas, a fellow student of Moreau le Jeune, patronized by Wille, and an occasional collaborator of Cochin, whose

eyesight had gradually interfered with his minute work, ranks with Le Mire, Gaucher, and Fiquet among the best engravers of portraits through the second half of the eighteenth century. His talent may have been uneven, but when at his best he combined skill and delicacy with a remarkable adherence to truth. A bust of Molière after Mignard in the famous illustrated edition of plays issued by Bret in 1773 is usually quoted as his masterpiece; but Portalis and Beraldi consider the "Marie Antoinette" after Fredou as the most attractive of Cathelin's plates. Though the engraver's work was slightly laboured on the face and neck, "yet the graceful "attitude, the youthful charm of the features, a subtle timidity of expression and "the elegant character of the whole interpretation combine to give a very good "likeness."

Fleurs-de-lis, roses, and oak leaves on the superb border are in harmony with the Latin quotation—"Whence did you hail, from what blissful past, which glorious "lineage . . ."—inscribed upon it. Although such flatteries were doomed to wither, the death of Marie Antoinette has shielded her life from the judgement of history. "By sending her to the scaffold," wrote Mme. de Stael, "you sanctified her."

The print is exceedingly rare. Bourcard reproduced it in his "Françaises du XVIII^{me}" as one of the finest portraits of the young Queen. The impression before us came from the Behague collection sold in 1877.

[1] "Étude iconographique sur les portraits de Marie Antoinette," published under the auspices of Baron de Vinck. So far two parts of it have appeared: the first dealing with the portraits of the Archduchess from her childhood to the age of sixteen, the second with those of the Dauphiness. The beauty of the illustrations is in keeping with the perspicuity of the text. It is hoped that the work will be carried on to completion, however difficult it must be since 1914 to procure information, photographs, and documents from the ex-Imperial archives and collections in Vienna.

SIGMUND FREUDENBERGER

(1745-1801)

THE "Universal Dictionary" of Larousse,[1] whose æsthetic creed, tinged with revolutionary prejudice, fluctuates between the classic and the romantic, traces to Watteau and Lancret the affectations and mannerisms of "Freudeberg," as he is called for short. The reference, intended to disparage the Master who renovated grace in art as well as his followers, would have flattered and astonished the Bernese water-colourist who could hardly connect his pictural pedigree with the leader of the eighteenth-century school. Having studied drawing under Handmann at Basle, he went to Paris in 1765, was introduced to Boucher, and made friends with Greuze, Roslin, and Halle, but instead of seeking a thorough French training, he joined the *atelier* of Wille, whose journal mentions him as an apprentice well worthy of encouragement. Although his landscapes and *genre* scenes showed but a scanty artistic sense and lacked the immaterial gift of charm which Providence has denied to Teutons, yet an editor's hasty choice was fixed on him as the draughtsman capable of carrying out a new scheme of illustrations of contemporary fashions and styles. "Thanks to our accurate "reproduction of the dress and deportment favoured in the best society," said the Tartufish preface to the "Suite d'Estampes" issued in 1774, "foreigners will gain "an insight into genuine French taste, without the misleading interference of "upholsterers, tailors, and milliners. But, since simple and virtuous homes do "not indulge in worldly vanities, were we to go to them for patterns of elegance, "the result would prove dull and fail to strike the imagination. We had therefore "no other choice but to present as models our so-called gallants or 'petit maîtres' "and the ladies of their set. Guided by their favourite apparel and exquisite ways, "not by their loose morals, we shall thus draw from nature a life-like picture of a "peculiar character."

A perusal of the first part of the "Monument du costume," without any

incursion into the second and third, shows Freudenberger to have been fairly equal to the task, though the compositions were not wholly his own, "J.H.E. inv." being inscribed under each scene, besides "Freud. del." The three transparent initials covered the identity of the artist's compatriot and patron, Eberts, a banker at whose offices in the Place des Victoires subscriptions to the publication were invited. An amateur and a collector, like most financiers of the time, no doubt he advanced the necessary funds and, being something of an etcher besides, he had apparently a hand in the selection and treatment of the subjects. The twelve plates devised under his supervision dealt with the occupations or pastimes of a pretty woman, rising from bed, dressing, receiving and paying calls, taking a walk, going to a dance, and then again to bed. As a record of French dress, furniture, and decoration at the close of Louis XV's reign, each scene is tastefully conceived; but a slight want of ease in the attitude, the grouping, and the inexpressive countenance of the figures, betrays the draughtsman's stolidity, a racial fault all the more apparent if the two following sections of the work be compared with the first.

The preliminary discourse accompanying the second part clearly implies that, as the success of the publication did not respond to the editor's anticipations, it had been found advisable to engage a superior artist, but the particulars of the decision and the split are not known. Two more engravings after Freudenberger, "les Mœurs du temps and l'heureuse Union" (Nos. 174, 175), obviously intended to open up the new set, were issued separately, the latter nevertheless being advertised as on sale at Moreau's.

Having interrupted his task, or finding himself discarded by his employers, Freudenberger returned to the Oberland, and undertook to illustrate a French "Heptaméron" which appeared at Berne in 1781. Mannered as his vignettes were, Guttenberg, Halbou and Longeuil engraved them admirably. Under the title of "Scrapbook of Bernese costumes" he then issued a hand-coloured collection of rather stiff pastoral scenes, displaying carefully snow-sprinkled toy huts, relieved by fine effects of light and enlivened by spick-and-span country folk and the inevitable marmot: a feeble achievement partly etched by the artist himself. What a downfall after a so-called "Monument" of very different costumes.

The Municipal Library at Berne has a portrait of Haller, the Helvetic financier and politician, and also one of Louis XVIII, by Freudenberger, both fairly good pictures, more characteristic of German technique than influenced by the tradition of Watteau, or the example of Boucher, Greuze, and Fragonard.

[1] The "great Larousse," as it is commonly called, issued between 1864 and 1876, is an enormous compilation of anecdotical character offering exceptional facilities to chroniclers and newspaper writers, a most entertaining dictionary compiled with little sense of proportion and still less critical spirit. The thirty-one volumes of the "Grande Encyclopédie" published between 1882 and 1896 present much more homogeneity and broad-mindedness, each element of information being appropriately joined as knowledge systematized, though not on the hard, fast, and dry lines of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" in its numerous editions by various firms.

172.

LA COMPLAISANCE MATERNELLE

Engraved by Nicolas de Launay

Second state.
Monogram of Mr. and Mme. Pujos.

In describing the state before us as the best or *bel état*, Bourcard mistook for a coat of arms the initials of the owners of the picture to whom their son had the engraving dedicated. Whatever may have been the merit of the original, there can be no doubt that de Launay wrought a considerable improvement upon the whole composition.

Modern reproductions taken from the old copper-plate and rather gaudily printed in colours enjoy popular favour.

On the back of this impression is stamped a most unusual collector's mark, that of the "Ministère de la Police," the word "Librarie" being discernible in the centre. We shall never know how and why "Maternal complacence" appealed to the police. Prints have their destinies.

173.

LA GAIETÉ CONJUGALE

Engraved by NICOLAS DE LAUNAY in 1783

First state.

ONE of the fourteen oval prints by de Launay, which rank among his finest works and form a famous set, mostly of domestic subjects. The superb borders give them a marked decorative character, despite the space taken by the spandrils on the small folios. Although each composition includes several figures and the minutest details, yet no crowding mars the general effect. So skilful is the distribution of light in each case that even at a distance the eye catches the *ensemble* and recognizes the magic of de Launay's burin over and above the deficiencies or the unevenness of some of the originals. Thanks to this refining process Freudenberger holds his own next to Fragonard, as does Leprince opposite Baudouin: the drawing of minor artists having been so improved upon by the engraver as to place the corresponding plates almost on an even level of excellence throughout the whole series.

Bourcard, who in 1893 attached no importance to "Conjugal merriment," described it as very graceful in 1912 and urged collectors to secure it in the first state, before the insertion of the coat of arms of the Marquis de St. Marc. Modern re-impressions abound, taken from the old copper-plate.

The list of the works exhibited at the Salon by N. de Launay between 1777 and 1791 mentions "la Gaieté conjugale," after a drawing by Mr. Frendeberg [*sic*]. "Chanson nouvelle" is written on the music sheet held by the merry wife.

174, 175.

L'HEUREUSE UNION—LES MŒURS DU TEMPS

A pair engraved by Louis Bosse and by Pierre Charles Ingouf respectively

First states.

Coats of arms of Baron von Holmer on the first and Mr. J. de Turckheim on the second.

IN the *atelier* of Flipart, almost wholly given to the interpretation of Greuze's popular pictures, P. C. INGOUF (1746-1800) and his younger brother learnt to carry their work very near completion with pure aqua-fortis, in order to suggest as far as possible the painter's technique. The elder had the privilege of finishing "la bonne Éducation" and "la Paix du ménage" after the same master, brilliantly etched by Moreau, who up to 1765 was principally occupied in preparing plates for other students. Wille in his journal appreciates more keenly the beauty of Ingouf's bride, a baker's daughter, than the bridegroom's style as an engraver.

All Portalis and Beraldi have to say about L. BOSSE is that he worked with no less an artist than Duclos on "le Coucher" after Freudenberger and that his best print is "l'heureuse Union." Among a few portraits reproduced by him are those of Louis XV and of Boucher. No dates are quoted with reference to his life.

The supposed original destination of the pair before us constitutes its chief interest. It appears that the Bernese water-colourist meant to open with it the second series of his illustrations of French manners and fashions, had not Eberts entrusted to Moreau the continuation of the great undertaking. Maybe these two plates weighed heavily on the editor's scales, either because the subject in one instance borders upon vulgarity, or else owing to a stiffness of execution which not even the light character of the compositions helped to dispel. The drawing lacks spontaneity and speaks with a Teutonic accent, more so than in any composition for the first section of the "Monument du costume"; probably because Ingouf and Bosse, who lacked the powers of a de Launay, adhered literally to the models set before them.

Two prices fetched within the last thirty-six years by the *gouache* of "les Mœurs" denote a fall in Freudenberger's auction-room value. It brought 1,220 francs in 1894 at the sale of the collection of Mr. Josse, who had given 4,000 francs

for it in 1880 when the Behague Library was dispersed. As for the indian ink sketch of "l'heureuse Union," it proved to be a negligible quantity among the Doucet art treasures in 1912.

In the respective second states, when the border had been eliminated and the privilege struck out, one print was entitled "la Surprise," the other "la Matinée." Having been reduced in size, both were inserted in the inferior edition of the "Monument du costume" issued at Neuwied in 1789. Bourcard, who describes the second as a conjugal scene, calls both compositions charming, although their only claim to charm seems to lay in the accurate reproduction of Louis XVI decoration, furniture, and dress.

The mention "I.H.E. inv," asserting the supervision of Eberts, the well-known patron of Freudenberger, on the twelve plates which had already appeared in the "Monument du costume," was maintained on the pair eventually excluded from that work. The dedication of "les Mœurs du temps" to Mr. de Turckheim is signed by the Swiss banker, who did not hesitate to lay stress on a flippant scene with the legend: "married to one woman, living with another, caring only for "oneself." It is fair to suppose that neither the dedicatee nor his family would take this bold statement amiss.

The qualification of "Grand Drossard" given to Baron von Holmer under the "heureuse Union" revives before us a term long fallen into disuse. *Drossard*, the title conferred at one time on the Chief Justice in the Low Countries, was in this case applied to the highest judge of one of the Hanseatic Principalities. The character of the personage must have vouched for the lawfulness of the happy union represented on the print.

176.

LISON DORMAIT

Engraved by PHILIPPE TRIÈRE

First state.

ESSENTIALLY a book illustrator, TRIÈRE (1756-18?) contributed several vignettes to the Kehl edition of Voltaire, the "Gerusalemme liberata" of Cochin, "les Liaisons dangereuses," the Crébillon after Marillier of 1785. But that he was not unequal to more important prints is evidenced by his collaboration with the great group of engravers employed by Prault in reproducing Moreau's designs for the "Monument du costume"; "J'en accepte l'heureux Présage" being entrusted to him, as well as the etching for "la grande Toilette" (No. 334, plates 15, 26). Portalis and Beraldi, however, pick out "Lison" as Trière's "most honourable plate." Not so Bourcard, who merely commends it for its extreme rarity; the impression before us, once in the Mühlbacher collection, being the only one he quotes from sale catalogues between 1877 and 1912.

LISON DORMAIT

By P. Trière. After S. Freudenberger

LE PETIT JOUR

By N. de Launay After S. Freudenberger

177.

LE PETIT JOUR

Engraved by NICOLAS DE LAUNAY

Second and third states.
Coat of arms of Mr. de Sandoz Rollin.

THE most luminous example of the wonderful improvement, nay, of the transformation wrought by the leading eighteenth-century engraver on a comparatively inferior picture. No trace is left upon it of Freudenberger's innate stiltedness: the shortcomings of his drawing are obliterated, the character of the figures has become so essentially French, the play of light is so perfect, each line so refined, that the print ranks among the finest of the school, if not, writes Bourcard, as the prettiest of all so-called boudoir subjects. The prevailing custom of pairing it with "l'heureux Moment" (No. 254) implies the highest praise. In both cases the burin of de Launay so completely takes the lead of the pencil or the brush he interprets, as to turn his plates into originals and make mere prompters of Lavreince and Freudenberger. Artistically and technically, the pre-eminence of "le petit Jour" over the first set of the "Monument du costume" is as marked as is the inferiority of the set itself to the two following sections of that work.

On an etching at the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Louis XVI panels of the dressing-room represented are decorated with ornaments which were obliterated in the finished state. S. W. Reynolds reproduced rather feebly the same subject in aquatint over the title "le petit Lever" after Moreau, an attribution which reads as a compliment to the engraver. The original Freudenberger drawing in bistre turned up at the Sardou sale in 1909 and did not fetch more than 8,500 francs. On the lower margin the woman's right arm was sketched in pencil.

The mark of the Bayard collection is stamped on the impression of the third state before us.

In the list of de Launay's prints for sale at his workshop, "le petit Jour" and "la Consolation de l'absence" (No. 248) are entered as a pair.

178.

LA TOILETTE

Etched by the Artist

Only state.

ACCORDING to Portalis and Beraldi this exceedingly rare plate shows Freudenberger at his best as a draughtsman and an etcher. Probably because it has not appeared at any auction sale between 1877 and 1912, Bourcard makes no reference to it. The same title is inscribed under a different composition, the third of the "Monument du costume," by the same artist, who has also etched a "Toilette champêtre." Both size and style in this case point to a book illustration.

JEAN FRANÇOIS GARNERAY

179.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY

Engraved by Pierre Michel Alix, printed in colours

First state.

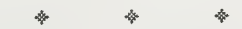
FOLLOWING to some extent, but with a different result, the cynical example of David, who had made a sketch of Queen Marie Antoinette on her way to the scaffold, his proselyte GARNERAY (1755-1837) drew a portrait of Charlotte Corday before the Revolutionary tribunal. In the midst of a howling audience the Girondin heroine, suddenly realizing the artist's purpose, overcame her emotion, smiled complacently and, adjusting the cap which was to become legendary, assumed a bold attitude. Later on, Garneray brought upon himself the wrath of his former patron by reverting from the trammels of neo-classic training and subjects to the domesticated Flemish tradition of interior scenes. At the Salon of 1814 his "Louis XVI on the terrace of the Temple prison" called for an awkward retrospect and filled David's measure: but what could the art dictator do then?

Better than most members of his craft, P. M. ALIX (1762-1817), a pupil of Lebas, had mastered the fine technicalities of the colour-printing process. On being asked how he arrived at a perfect fusion of shades on his prints, all the recipe he could offer was a meticulously accurate butt-jointing of the consecutive plates. Far, however, from achieving through his skill the results which made the name of Debucourt famous, whenever Alix attempted any large works the result would suggest the illuminated decoration of a musical box of which the principal puppets are to be set in jerky motion by a crank. But with isolated figures, better still with oval in quarto busts, he was almost the equal of Janinet and on a level with Sergent.

Iconography as practised by Alix ignored political consistency. Between 1790 and 1797 he reproduced thirty-four pictures of Revolutionary leaders, and kept up imperturbably this output until the Restoration. A chronological display of his portraits sets off the most piquant contrast of governments, showing how French winds blew through a lapse of thirty years. There may be among them a few gaudy specimens of downright popular imagery prompted by sudden demand, but the aptitudes of Alix should be gauged by his masterpiece, "Marie Antoinette," after Vigée Lebrun (No. 271), the extreme rarity of which is due to the immediate

obliteration of the plate when the artist's premises were searched by the police, and he hastened to produce medallions of Charlotte Corday, Marat, and St. Fargeau, "in keeping with the life and spirit which people rave about and clamour for."

On the fall of Robespierre, Alix brought forth "The triumph of the Republic," the loudest waste of cinnabar pigment imaginable. Under the Directoire he indulged in somewhat lighter themes: "Venus landing at Cythera" and "Love's signal station and magic lantern"; then came the turn of the Bonapartes, whose likenesses had a ready sale, of the baby King of Rome, of Pope Pius VII, of Queen Hortense and, for her sake, of "Beau Dunois," the legendary knight bound for Syria. A print of the Duchess of Berry impersonating France led by Hope, over the legend "Frenchmen, the House of Bourbon expects an heir," closed the series.



M. H. Charlotte d'Armont Corday (1768-1793) of a noble family of Normandy, great grand-niece of Corneille, carefully educated, absorbed Roman republican ideas, and to emulate Brutus assassinated Marat on the 13th of July, 1793, as the tyrant who had overthrown the Girondists, because they wished to establish orderly government. She was guillotined two days afterwards.

Portalis mentions the rarity of this portrait in proof state among the "Great Men" engraved by Alix, edited by Droukin.

LE TRIOMPHE DE MINETTE

By G. Vidal. After Marguerite Gérard

LE TRIOMPHE DE MINETTI.

Dédié à Mlle Gérard

MARGUERITE GÉRARD

180.

LE TRIOMPHE DE MINETTE

Engraved by Gerard Vidal, printed in colours

VIDAL alone in all probability might have explained the inner meaning of a *fleuron* where the rays from a circle of stars shine upon a winged heart; but next to the dedication of this plate to her, no attention could gratify the painter of "Minette" more than the qualification of "pupil of Mr. Fragonard" inserted by the engraver after her name, even at a time when "l'Escarpolette" was looked upon as antiquated and "l'Armoire" as unseemly.

Marguerite GÉRARD (1761-1837), the youngest of the twelve children of a distiller at Grasse, was early taught to draw and to etch by her brother-in-law, "the god-father of my talent, my master and good friend Frago," whose technique she assimilated to a certain extent, without ever coming near to his inspiration, facility, and *bravura*. But her laboured and rather cold vignettes satisfied a section of the reading public under the Consulate, while such mantelpiece insipidities as "Girls dreaming of love," "Girls fondling a kitten," were to elicit from the honeyed "Salon Critic" of 1806 the following appreciation: "Her candid soul bids "her brushes to gather the virginal colours of budding flowers. As for the domestic "charm breathing through her pictures, its spell is all the more admirable because "the winsome artist has refused to yield to it in private life and has remained "single for the sake of art, her sole ideal." That year, no newspaper had made the slightest reference to the death of Fragonard.

In 1810 the newly-married Empress Marie Louise admired so much "le triomphe de Minette" that Napoleon sent Mlle. Gérard a gold medal of the value of 500 francs. Pussy's mistress was the portrait of Marguerite herself as she once had been, a type of Provençal Minerva with prepossessing features, a stately figure, dark eyes, curly, unpowdered hair. With its satins, its fur, and a curtain skilfully rendered, with the remarkable still life effects of the 'cello and the chocolate pot, the picture conceived under the obvious influence of Frago's Dutch manner had some fine passages; the lady's head, the whole form of her purring pet, being the weak points of this "Triumph."

The print has always been popular in Paris.

HUBERT FRANÇOIS BOURGUIGNON GRAVELOT

181.

LE CONCERT

Etched by Jean-Claude-Richard de Saint Non

The etching.

FINE cuts, apt to enliven the text of books of small dimensions, which after long disuse came once more into vogue under Louis XV, differed in execution and spirit from the engravings inserted in folio volumes, which might have looked as well on the walls. A salient feature of such a revival was its successful application to the editions of a new class of emotional novels prompted by everyday life, and depending for their circulation on light volumes easy to the hand, and adorned with attractive vignettes. This particular style of illustration brought forth a master in Hubert Bourguignon, surnamed GRAVELOT (1699-1773), who was to point the way to Cochin, Eisen, and Moreau.[1]

He was giving promise of excellence in the studio of Restout, when, as a punishment for some youthful indiscretion, his father shipped him off to San Domingo.[2] The maps of that island kept him comparatively busy until, at the age of thirty, he returned to Paris. Although Boucher gave him encouragement, Gravelot realized very soon that competition in his own diminutive line would not be so keen on the other side of the Channel, and he left for England, there to remain for fifteen years, drawing antiquities and monuments, preparing cartoons for the tapestry of the House of Lords, and providing publishers and artists with all sorts of designs.

His "Humours of the lottery," engraved by Parr, and suggesting the manner of a prim Hogarth, his sketches of members of the Commons, his headings of ballad sheets, a frontispiece to the Kitcat Club, above all, his vignettes for the "Dunciad" and for an English history, brought to the fore his personal way of looking at life.[3] Then an editor—perhaps John Bowles at the Black Horse—who had anglicised into Gravelott the patronymic of this witty Frenchman, entrusted him with the illustrations of Hammer's "Shakespeare."[4] What an unhappy thought, that of dragging the light-hearted Louis XV art from its element and

limitations, in order to couple it with the majesty of genius and strand it in the regions of tragedy. The crushing disproportion between the names of Shakespeare and Gravelot suggests the ridicule to which a Gallic interpretation was doomed, as well as the time wasted over false backgrounds and conventional picturesqueness, when living English subjects offered plenty of scope for the powers of a pencil which took after Watteau.

Gravelot's most significant work during his stay under the sign of the Gold cup in King Street, Covent Garden, is to be found in the pages of Fielding's "Tom Jones." Mariette wrote of it: "By entering into the national character of his "subjects he showed special faculties and met with a success that brought him "more money than if he had painted large canvases."[5] The distinction emanating from English ladies and gentlemen, the insular ways of the people, the local colour of their surroundings, were grasped by him with a vividness of perception which influenced his compositions over and over again. And when he returned to his own country,[6] he carried away with him, among other British tastes, a marked preference for the demure apparel affected by Pamela or Clarissa, for their ingenuous straw hats, for their simple gowns, all whiteness, daintiness, and modesty, to which Parisians were to trace the sudden vogue of lawn frocks, of mendacious neckerchiefs and, in point of fact, of the whole wardrobe of the "Nouvelle Heloise."

In France where vignettes had become an indispensable addition to literary works, where the least scrap of paper, visiting cards, business cards, theatre tickets, and even passports were expected to entertain the eye, Gravelot became the cynosure of leading publishers. The beauty of his vignettes for the Rousseau of 1761 and the Corneille of 1764, the success of his "Decameron,"[7] wherein with amusing inconsistency he had transplanted Versailles to Florence and Cythera to Lilliput, captivated even the guiding spirit of a rationalistic century which had but recently condemned the vain ornament of illustrations. As a royal quarto edition of his works in thirty volumes was being prepared at Geneva in 1768, Voltaire welcomed the suggestion of Cramer, the editor, to employ "the celebrated draughtsman" and leave to him the choice of the engravers. A neatly-turned letter of the artist submitting a few sketches to the Patriarch of Ferney dwells on "this unique opportunity "to share even to a trifling extent a poet's immortality": the feeble side, it must be owned, of his own particular immortality, as long as he depended for it on tragedies and epics. While he lost grip and directness with classic and romantic subjects, scenes of contemporary life staged within Louis XV interiors became his strong point. Of their subtle and representative quality Portalis writes: "On drawing-room sofas "or under rustic arbours his prettily-dressed characters are elegantly grouped. As "for the situations in which to depict them, he goes by preference to love scenes. "No pencil better than his practised the reticent art of holding back whatever the "reader can easily guess." The enlightened critic is mistaken, however, when he affirms that, whatever Boucher's opinion may have been, Gravelot made an indifferent

painter. He painted as he drew, without pretension or emphasis, with a remarkable feeling for the right setting of his subjects, witness his Chardinian "Reader," engraved by Gaillard.[8]

Besides giving evidence of culture, his letters throw light on the progress of his work, on the retiring ways of an existence in contrast with early hopes long delayed for lack of means, but satisfied at last with "a decent home in the Rue St. "Honoré, next the Oratory, with books, pencils, burins, a good health, please God, "and a few friends." Among the latter he reckoned Garrick and his wife, whose memory, he wrote to them in 1766, "is a true blessing," whose portraits he kept by him.[9]

He read omnivorously, wrote verses and a treatise on perspective. He loved his art and contrived to live by it, but being without ambition, determined not to cringe to anybody; he never sought the sanction of the Academy, thus earning the censure of Boucher, and satisfying a taste for independence acquired in the freer and easier London life. A pastel by Latour engraved by Massard, shows him as a good, easy old man, with heavy features and bright eyes, the type of a village patriarch *à la* Greuze. At seventy-one, as he was getting blind, Gravelot married again for the sake of company, his bride being about thirty-two. Three years after he died of indigestion.

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SAINT NON (1727-1791), a fancy archaeologist, "born for art and friendship," turned into an Abbé and a Parliamentary Counsel because of family considerations, was no more intended for theology than for cavil. His devotion to an undertaking on which he spent all he possessed and more besides entitles him to be regarded as the most enthusiastic amateur of the latter half of the eighteenth century, while his etchings show the influence wielded over him by two genial *protégés*.

Having seized the earliest opportunity to sell his legal and clerical charge, he undertook a journey to Italy, as a devout Mussulman might have started on a pilgrimage to Mecca. He worshipped there before the old Masters, studied antiquities, climbed up Mount Vesuvius, and was among the first foreigners to descend into the excavations of Herculaneum. Good fortune placed across his path Fragonard and Hubert Robert, then pensioners at the French Academy in Rome, who steeped themselves in the monuments and sights so dear to him, while they wandered over the Campagna jotting down their impressions on endless drawings for the Abbé to transfer on to the copper.[10] To this combined labour between 1759 and 1761 we owe a large set of "Views of Rome and its neighbourhood" in an undescribed style of engraving called *griffonis* by St. Non; hasty sketches of forgotten corners in some patrician villa, perspectives of neglected old gardens, of mossy terraces crowned with crumbling statues, enlivened by fountains

and peopled with tiny figures, etched every one of them with a spirited perception of the process and the intervention here and there of the two students and fellow travellers. "This amateur finds amusement in work," wrote Natoire, then at the head of the school in Rome, to Marigny; "and Fragonard has done for him "some fine studies which are sure to be a credit to both."

His mind full of Italian visions, St. Non returned to Paris. Having learnt from the print-dealer de la Fosse an expeditious way of strengthening aquafortis with aquatint, closely resembling the method of Le Prince and having pledged himself never to reveal its secret, he published "a selection of 294 plates after "drawings by Fragonard and Robert of the most interesting palaces, churches, and "galleries in Italy." Stimulated by the popularity of Piranesi's "Roman antiquities," while the monuments of Naples and Sicily seemed to be either unknown or neglected, he went back to the country of his choice, there to devote his fortune and life to a greater work: "A picturesque Journey to the two Sicilies, with a reference "also to natural history."

The enthusiasm by which he was inspired communicated itself at first to the zealous supporters whom he approached concerning the preparation of his undertaking, de Laborde and William Beckford among them. He engaged the costly co-operation of Saint Fond the geologist, of Dolomieu the mineralogist, of architects, landscape painters, and archaeologists, to be supervised by Vivant-Denon, of such burinists as Choffard, St. Aubin, Guttenberg, Martini, Marillier, and Duplessis-Bertaux. He entrusted the text to eminent specialists, only reserving for his own execution the headings and tail-pieces in which figured bits of antiques adorned with wreaths, in keeping with the motto "art is to life what flowers are "to gardens." His was to be the drudgery of proof-reading, of collating each contribution, and inserting the illustrations; his the satisfaction of spoiling each artist by dint of liberality.

The great enterprise went steadily on from 1778 till 1786, when it was complete in five folio volumes, "thanks to which a man of culture need not leave "his studio and yet can inspect pictures, statues, and ruins. . . ." Complete also was the ruin of its creator. Amateurs who had promised to contribute to the expenses wearied of the calls on their funds, and Saint Non kept his engagements by casting his own and his brother's fortune into the gulf of an illustrated trip to Naples and Palermo.[11]

The fire which sustained the genial Abbé throughout a desperate struggle seemed to have been stirred by the breath of the coming Revolution. Rousseau was his friend, so was Franklin, under whose eyes he engraved "the genius of "the American Brutus." Perhaps he felt that by the conscientious perfection of a disastrous task he had in a measure co-operated with those "who were engaged in "the great attempt to bring the sincerity of truth to bear on the whole domain of

"knowledge." The generous delusion of a national regeneration consoled him in the hour of death; his last words were: "does patriotism keep up?"

While his technical execution seldom rose above that of a gifted dilettante, and although he devoted himself almost exclusively to what he called architectural landscapes, yet on three figure subjects Saint Non's performance with the needle is far above the average. The "Concert" has what professionals term "a real air," and wit besides; next are a group of smart idlers in the Barberini gardens and a *genre* scene of two women chatting in a bedroom. Messrs. de Goncourt, who take special notice of the first, describe it as "a skit on a musical party between peri-"wigged amateur performers. The portly leader stamps his foot, the Abbé scrapes "for all he is worth on the 'cello, the fiddlers struggle and strum; the whole enter-"tainment is for the benefit of a pair of foolish wenches in furbelows and laces, "apparently enchanted with the noise and the fuss."

The size of this composition comes almost as an exception among the engraved works of a vignettist seldom concerned with quartos and octavos, as the specialist *par excellence* of 12mos, nay even of 24mos. Probably the "Concert" had been intended as an illustration to a novel; certainly Gravelot instilled into it besides his observant humour, his perfect taste for rococo decoration and Louis XV furniture. The apartment represented is worthy of smartly dressed Don Juans and elderly Lovelaces showing off before pert dames, the "divine little creatures" of the time, whose attitudes suggest Sèvres china figures, and whose attire, by the draughtsman's favourite device, is a compromise between English and Pompadour fashions. Was Gravelot satisfied with the interpretation by St. Non? Writing to Garrick in 1766, he refers to a few specimens sent to Mrs. Garrick, that she should see what he had been doing: "although with all that is published over my name allowances "must be made for an engraver whose hand goes over my own work and often "makes me feel as if I had had a thrashing."

The original pen-and-pencil drawing fetched 19 francs at the Tondu sale in the days of classic reaction. In 1885, at the dispersion of the la Beraudière collection, it was bought by Mr. Mühlbacher. The etching before us, once in the portfolio of Mr. Bayard, is a trial proof taken by Saint Non ere his background was quite finished.

[1] The apotheosis of this delightful art was worthily figured by Choffard in the final *fleuron* for the Ovid of 1767-71; under a Cupid seated on clouds, in the midst of laurel leaves and artistic attributes, a chain of medals links together the names of draughtsmen and engravers: Boucher and Leprince, Monnet and Lemire, A. de Saint Aubin, de Launay, Simonet, Nee, Ponce, Basan, de Longueil, de Ghendt, Duclos, Masquelier, Baquoy, and the four little great masters of the vignette: Gravelot, Cochin, Eisen, and Moreau.

[2] Not to Canada, as Walpole has it in his short article "Anecdotes of Painting" on Gravelot, whom

he first calls Henri; an error replaced by another when he confuses his name with that of François H. d'Anville, the famous geographer, brother of Hubert Bourguignon.

3 Lady Dilke calls attention to the blue-coat boys who cap a portrait of Edward VI in one of these volumes and are represented with an absolute detachment from any pre-conceived ideal of what a boy should look like that makes them amusing. Messrs. de Goncourt wax indignant at the supposed intention of the British Museum to classify Gravelot among the English draughtsmen: "Why not Watteau "and Latour on the same count?"

4 Although it is commonly supposed that they were drawn by Hayman, Walpole states that Gravelot designed many, "every one being of his graving." The interpretation of Hamlet's play scene in this edition is the last straw of wrong French "good taste": Hamlet in the attitude of a gallant, Gertrude as a Molière leading lady, Claudius as the pompous Marquis of a comedy of manners, a row of pretty fiddlers frolicking in the background as at a country fair.

5 General Andreossy, Napoleon's Ambassador at the Court of St. James, collected a quantity of Gravelot drawings in London, some of them attributed to Lancret. Messrs. de Goncourt, who eventually bought them at a sale in 1864, detected through them the confirmation of an old statement that the artist often used as models different lay figures fifteen inches high, made in London, carefully padded and jointed, provided with a considerable wardrobe and easily dressed up according to the character required.

6 Is there any truth in the legend that Gravelot was driven from London, when, after the battle of Fontenoy and the success of Marshal de Saxe, the air of Great Britain had become anti-French, or was not his marriage which took place about that time a sufficient reason for one of his disposition not to go abroad again?

7 Gravelot's objection to licentious drawing was relaxed in this case. Writing to an amateur who wanted a few extra vignettes for his Boccaccio he says: "With that particular sort of composition a "certain reticence is preferable to grossness, though there are people, I know, who prefer butcher's meat "to partridges."

8 The picture, described by de Goncourt as loaned by "Mr. Woman" in 1867 to the Burlington Fine Arts Club, passed from the collection of Mr. Wornum to that of Mr. Heseltine.

9 That Gravelot's relations to them were of the closest intimacy is indicated by letters published in the "Correspondence of David Garrick." Bachaumont's secret memoirs show that this friendship did not cease with the artist's departure from England. An entry in 1765 refers to a medallion of Mlle. Clairon drawn by Gravelot and engraved by Lemire over a complimentary epigram purporting to come from Garrick, who fourteen years before had predicted the success of the French tragédienne and now wished to present her with her portrait.

10 Tourists by slow coaches in those days knew what they saw, and looked at the landscape. Since motors are the proper conveyance for pleasure-trips, it is astonishing how many people are seen by mountains, lakes, trees, and waterfalls, and how little of nature is as much as glanced at by motorists.

11 Of all illustrated folio editions issued in the eighteenth century, the "Voyage pittoresque de St. Non, ou description du Royaume de Naples et de Sicile," 1781-86, in five volumes, is the most beautiful, the best balanced, and the richest in plates. It contains 5 *fleurons*, 1 dedication to Queen Marie Antoinette, drawn and engraved by the author, 298 plates, 14 of which are of Sicilian medals, 15 headings, 96 tail-pieces, 6 maps, and 1 plan. The original drawings, which belonged to Laborde, the farmer-general, whose "Chansons" were illustrated by Moreau, have disappeared; so has a copy of the work containing all the etchings, and included in the Legendre sale of 1798. Two copies with all the plates before letters are well known: one in the Dutuit collection, the property of the city of Paris; the other, now in the library of Mr. Irwin Laughlin at Washington, was the subscription copy of William Beckford.

Both, bound in red morocco, bear the label of Derôme, with whom St. Non had made a contract for six similar bindings. As for a third copy, containing the unlettered plates, but not in the Derôme binding, belonging at one time to Marshal Massena, and sold with the Martin collection in 1877, its present owner has not been traced. Nor is it known what became of thirty-two etchings for the same work presented by St. Non to Beckford (1760-1844), his patron, who had amassed a splendid library at Fonthill Abbey, and was an interesting figure among *litterateurs* and *cognoscenti* because of his wealth and extravagance, his taste as a collector, and his success as the author of "Vathek," an Oriental romance in French.

JEAN BAPTISTE GREUZE

(1725-1805)

THE original blend of sentiment and sensuality which characterized his art, in contrast to that of predecessors and contemporaries, attracted no followers. His talent was said to be self-trained, an assumption reflecting small credit on Grandon, who professed to show apprentices how to paint one picture a day, and from whom he received his first lessons at Lyons.[1] Whatever may have been the benefit of these early exertions, the young man soon transferred his ambitions to Paris, and though he joined no *atelier*, his remarkable disposition was somehow discovered by Pigalle, the sculptor, who presented him to the Academy in 1754 on the strength of his "Blind man cheated." When Lalive de Jully, one of the most judicious collectors of the century, bought his "Father explaining the Bible," the pleasing composition, the contrast between the patriarchal look of the old man and the liveliness of the children on that unusual Sunday-school scene, established the reputation of Greuze as the chosen interpreter of a reaction against licence and luxury of which Rousseau and Diderot were strenuous criers.

To silence those who taxed him with ignorance of the grand style, he undertook a journey to Italy with the learned Abbé Gougenot. But the monuments of antiquity, the masterpieces of the Renaissance, played on the fancy of most Frenchmen—the statement is attributed to Boucher—as water trickles on a duck's back, and all Greuze carried away from Rome were the pangs of a love affair and the image of a brunette perpetuated on his "Prière à l'amour."

Having returned to Paris unmoved by classic models, after bringing forth with more noise than effect a few imitations of Chardin and Boucher combined, he inaugurated that alluring series of single juvenile figures which were to redeem before posterity the indecision of colour, the dazzling lights and thick shadows, the dabbled backgrounds of his large canvases, likened by a stern Academician to painted china turning black. Nothing by comparison could be more brightly touched and vividly modelled than the sunny and chubby countenance of sitters

fresh from nature's mould, chosen among pretty children rather than from every-day childhood.

In his busts and heads of girls, Greuze now and then rises to excellence, though, in spite of keen powers of observation, he followed routine in the clay-cold quality of mannered draperies. He renders to perfection the dawn of womanly beauty on the features of a maiden, the deep, enticing glance, the vague quivering of the lips, the premature, wholly Greuzian, love-sick look. "Linked sweetness long "drawn out," of a softness of expression obtained by an abuse of *méplats*, these so-called studies, over-finished in most cases, are carried off in some with a spirit which reminds one of Rubens, the broad renovator of the French school through the Marie de Medici panels at the Luxembourg Palace.

Already in the artist's lifetime connoisseurs of the stamp of Count de Veri went by preference to his "Cruches Cassées," "Laitières," "Tendres Désirs," "Tricoteuses," and "Voluptueuses" (Nos. 182, 183, 186, 187, and 188), whose attractions were those of the first bloom of youth caught with admirable directness, whose brilliant play of line, firm rendering of the mouth, and vigour of flesh tints, relieved against white linen, stood out as an unmistakable signature. Wille cornered several of them as "solid, profound, precious, among the most precious "contemporary pictures," to which he had opened the German market, and Greuze repaid him by painting that vigorous and convincing likeness of the Saxon burinist which comes as a surprise—so unlike a Greuze as it is—in the André Jacquemart collection.[2] An admirable "Sophie Arnould" at Hertford House, a "Robespierre" at Mentmore, prove what the artist could do in that line, though "as most people," writes Mariette, "dislike too much simplicity and *naïveté*, various portraits by Greuze, presenting "a character of truth which should make them valuable, seem to meet with little "success."[3] Not so with us now.

In 1761, public enthusiasm ran riot over "l'Accordée du village." Again, the technical shortcomings of the composition were obliterated by the tender feeling running through it: the good-natured old father, the happy action of the mother clinging to her daughter's arm, the grief of a younger sister, the puzzled simplicity of the children, the shyness of the bride, barely touching with her finger-tips the hand of the bridegroom, the ingenuous intentions of the slightest detail, even the foreground allusion of the chicken and her chicks, became the talk of Paris, all the more so that from the Salon the picture went straight off to the collection of Marigny, brother of Madame de Pompadour.[4] As an unprecedented

evidence of sudden popularity the Théâtre Italien introduced a living reproduction of it in the "Noces d'Arlequin."

Stimulated by this triumph, Greuze determined to work out for a time his vein of sentimentality and to illustrate the pathos of domestic virtues to which the curiosity of fashionable society, overdone with mythological and other questionable scenes, had taken a liking. His aim was not so much to display a limner's genius as to entrust to it the care of souls by founding a school of literary painting and ethical art, in order to reform French morals by strokes of the brush. In quest of reliable documents he scoured the suburbs and markets, trying to seize human passions alive, sketching, jotting down notes at cafés and theatres, explaining in the "Journal de Paris" the psychology and circumstances of his melodramatic subjects: how he watched on the Pont-Neuf the hard-hearted "Stepmother," how at Chaville he saw the "Paralytic nursed by his family," how he observed at Viroflay the "charitable Curate."[5]

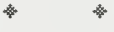
Because of the Master's ever-increasing reputation, the Academy took occasion in 1767 to press him for a long-delayed diploma picture, and forbade him to exhibit at the Salon until the traditional regulation had been complied with. "I saw the letter," says Diderot, "a model of urbanity and consideration. I saw "the reply: a pattern of impertinence and self-sufficiency, which could only have "been backed up with a *chef-d'œuvre*, and that is precisely what Greuze failed "to do."

Wishing to be acclaimed as a historical painter and to exclude any minor qualification, he produced "Severus reproaching his son Caracalla for plotting to murder him." The unfortunate canvas, now at the Louvre, shown in 1769 side by side with his admirable "Girl with a black cat," far from vindicating his new claim, brought down upon him the formal censure of the Academy. "Sir," said Lemoine, the Director, "you are received in our midst, as a *genre* painter, out of "consideration for your former and excellent works, while we have shut our eyes "upon the last one as unworthy of the Academy and of yourself."

The incident, which annulled the chances of a professorate and other honorific functions, so angered and humiliated Greuze, that he never again exhibited at the Salon, until its doors were thrown open to all in 1804.[6] He quarrelled with his

fellow members and appealed to the public by inserting in the "Avant Coureur" his own *apologia*, where he maintained that the genuine article could be found in his *atelier*, whereas the Academy only required coloured illustrations.[7] An anonymous letter on the Salon of that year contained a pointed retort: "Why unearth an "enigmatic episode which art cannot interpret? Was Teniers below Teniers "because he did not paint the Court of Augustus, or is not Préville one of the "best actors of the Comédie Française although he does not take the part of "Mithridates? *In pelle propria quiesce*: lie in your own skin, you who can be "accurate in the simple, sublime in the naïve, and incapable in the heroic style."

Captivated at one time by the freshness of Greuze's gifts and seeing in him still "one who draws, imagines, and colours, who has the touch and the idea," Diderot, while gradually retracting some of his praise, tried to account for the mortifying adventure, not on the plea of the limitations of too facile a genius, but because of the conjugal worries that withered it. Coming as it does from a biting critic, the defender at one time and almost the confessor of Greuze, this reference to a skeleton in the cupboard is above suspicion.[8] White and erect as a lily, pink as a rose with doll-like features, Gabrielle Babuty, the artist's worse half and evil genius, instilled into him a craving for money, raised the devil round his easel, and deprived him of the peace of mind which alone can foster beautiful or vigorous work.



With the best intentions, the Master took his inspiration from nature and did not adhere to it. Truth being his starting point, inclination bolted away with him. He would give wit to the heart, intentions to passions, manners to grace, conventions to pathos. When transferred from paper to canvas, his sketches lost the breadth of life and were affected by the very insincerity against which they protested. Ideas, expressions, and lines became unavoidably sweet; poverty as well as beauty must look pretty. The majority of his large compositions suggest the lachrymatory scene of a comic opera; his rustic interiors might have been copied from a thatched cottage at the Petit Trianon. The characters are actors rehearsing poses and grins rather than plain honest folks leading the simple life or toiling in earnest; his little beggars are Boucher's Cupids just come down the chimney. "The soap of his 'Savonneuse' won't lather."

Haunted by a moral purpose which he could never make visible enough to

his satisfaction, Greuze planned to produce a regular set of pictures where the results of good and bad education might be recorded by double entry, on the tedious example of Hogarth. He became the worthy exponent on canvas of the illusions unsuccessfully staged by Diderot, as well as of Rousseau's utopian attacks upon an artificial civilization. He endeavoured to set upon the hearth the gods of duty, to dress virtue like a doll and to weave charity into the humanitarian romance of a century, which had become sensitive like Don Juan in his dotage. But if his sermons in colours moved tender-hearted philanthropists "even "more so than the sight of a cradle," as a Salon critic put it, or if his *bonnes mères* and fricassees of babies "preached population," they left on the mind a complex and troubled impression, far removed from the straightforward sense of domestic serenity and unaffected contentment that pervades the work of Chardin.

A new Baudouin turned virtuous by superior order, Greuze captivated the public by investing his lessons of bourgeois morality with a meretricious seemliness which appeared to him as the alliance of uprightness with art. Through his self-conscious popular subjects ran a vein of wanton suggestion betrayed by the daintily disordered dresses of his heroines. "However piteous the "situation, there is certain to be some corner of his compositions in which "the eye can detect the charms of unripened beauty revealed with theatrical "indiscretion. Even in the "Father explaining the Bible," the instinct that "bade him associate a voluptuous stimulus and the pursuit of mere prettiness "with a theme pertaining to religion tempted him to give prominence to a pensive "girl whose kerchief is torn where it should have been previously darned. The "result of Greuze's play with high principles and the flesh was a piquancy of "contrast which attracted Frenchmen as well as foreigners, caused his pictures of "homely dramas to command long prices, and created a demand for his seventy-one "engraved works of which Flipart, Massard jun., and Gaillard seem to have made "a speciality."[9] Most of the latter nowadays are discarded as depressing articles of decoration by collectors who, like Mr. Christophle, only set a value on the supposed portrait of Mme. Greuze and a few studies of "expressive heads."

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Having outlived a didactic tendency of which he had been the only interpreter in art, Greuze, like many another spoilt child of the eighteenth century cast aside by the Revolution, spent his old age in watching the obliteration of his name and

expiating the inordinate success which had contributed to throw Boucher into the shade. "An indefatigable worker, he had earned considerable money, but his "affairs, already embarrassed by the venality and extravagance of his wife, suffered "irretrievable ruin in the political and social troubles which engulfed the institu- "tions and fortunes of the old *régime*." With every new Davidian canvas a little more contempt fell on the pictures of yore, and Greuze died in poverty at eighty years of age. His daughter's loving devotion reminded one or two cronies of the "Paralytic nursed by his Children," over which Paris and the Tsar of Russia had waxed fervid in 1779.

[1] The principal distinction of Grandon, a portrait painter of some repute in his time, was to be the father-in-law of Grétry, who, as a composer, enjoyed the height of favour in Paris.

[2] Frequent transactions with Greuze, "my true friend," are noted by Wille. In December 1759: "I "have paid 192 livres for the finest drawing he has yet made, 'A Woman roasting chestnuts.' As a present "he has given me another of a cook standing against a cupboard; a beauty in black and white, on grey "paper."

[3] As a proof Mariette relates that the Dauphin was so pleased with his portrait by Greuze, that he asked him to paint that of the Dauphine. Seeing the quantity of rouge which disfigured her cheeks in obedience to fashion, the artist begged to be excused, and made matters worse by adding, with the brutality of a *sabotier*, "such heads I cannot manage."

[4] Greuze's price was 3,000 livres. In 1782, at the Ménars sale, the King bought it for 16,650 livres, having given as a reserve from 20,000 to 24,000, a record figure in those days. The picture is now at the Louvre.

[5] The Tsar told him: "You are the poet of your own paintings." Mme. Roland, who relates the pretty phrase, adds that Greuze was perfectly delighted when she said to him: "If anything could enhance the "expression of your pictures, it is the description you give of them." After extolling the beauties of the "Ungrateful son" and the "Punishment of the bad son," Diderot writes: "If ever these two projects "should be carried out, taste has fallen so low that Boucher will find an easier market for his dull, indecent "marionettes than Greuze for two sublime pictures. Is not his 'Paralytic' still in his studio? yet it is a "masterpiece. They heard talk of it at Court. They sent for it: it was admired, not bought, and it cost the "artist some twenty crowns to attain the inestimable happiness of . . . but I must hold my tongue."
The "Paralytic" is now at the Ermitage.

[6] The incident showed that such work as that produced by Greuze, no matter how good, was persistently considered inferior to so-called historical painting. Lady Dilke aptly remarks that a vital principle with the Roman and French schools was to balance any deficiency in colour by quality of composition. The classic power of "staging" a subject explains the tendency towards historical or academic work. Yet, in spite of prejudices against *genre*, the attractiveness of the aspect of current life was such that the number of *genre* subjects increased steadily, while the only historical paintings to be seen at the Salon of 1789 were those executed on royal commissions. "Without them," reported d'Angivillier, "there "would have been nothing but easel pictures."

[7] Miger, the engraver, has left some curious remarks on Greuze's vanity: "It was unnecessary when "visiting him to praise his pictures, since the artist did so himself: the only implement wanting in his "studio being an incense burner. The average amateur according to him runs through the Salon "post haste, whip in hand, and need only say 'How beautiful!' at random, while the true connoisseur "should go there in a night-cap and dressing-gown the moment the doors open, stop before *his* pictures, "get imbued with their purport, and be prepared to spend the whole day in ecstasies. Such was the man."

"Our painter is vain," writes Diderot, "but his vanity is that of a child. Take from him the simplicity that "bids him say of his own work, 'Look; that *is* beautiful,' you will suppress the spirit, put out his fire, "eclipse his genius. If ever he becomes modest, I am afraid he may have good reasons for it."

8 "When I was young," writes Diderot, "her name was Mlle. Babuty, and she helped her father, a "bookseller of the Quai des Augustins. Being in love with her myself, I used to go in and out of their "little shop, and ask for naughty novels, . . . she pretended to be offended, but the next day when I "passed the place she would smile, so did I . . . so did Greuze. Only he came back so often that one "day he found himself married to her without having done much for it."

9 Messrs. de Goncourt quote some remarkable bids obtained by Greuze's pictures, especially heads and shoulders of girls and boys, at famous auction sales of the time of Louis XVI. English amateurs do not seem to have been attracted by them, for in 1793, when Mr. de Calonne sold at Christie's "his noble and "superlatively capital assemblage of paintings," only £33 and £61 respectively were given for "l'Offrande à l'amour" and the "Girl in ecstasy." Under the second Empire the purchases of Prince Demidoff, Lord Ward, and Lord Hertford contributed to a revival in Greuze quotations which has not been maintained in proportion to the present demand for other eighteenth-century masters.

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LA CRUCHE CASSÉE—LA LAITIÈRE

A pair engraved by Jean Massard in 1773 and by Jean Charles Levasseur in 1783 respectively

Early proof of the first; second state of the second.
Coat of arms of Councillor Duché under the second.

GREUZE, who had an eye for business and commanded long prices, realized that the permanent co-operation of a few good engravers would swell his income and help to maintain his reputation in the provinces. He knew that people who could not afford to give him commissions would welcome the reproduction of his pictures in print, while the wanton scenes of Baudouin and Lavreince were being relegated to the lumber-room in favour of a more moral imagery. This practical consideration induced him to enter into a regular association with Massard, Levasseur, Flipart, and Gaillard, who undertook to interpret, popularize, and exploit his works under his direct supervision. The success of the partnership, of which "la Cruche cassée" and "la Laitière" proved to be the most valuable assets, was such that to guard against counterfeits and to authenticate the plates sent abroad, Greuze and his burinists often signed them at the back.

MASSARD (1740-1822) owed his training to Wille. In the first rank as a book illustrator, his twelve vignettes and thirteen tail-pieces after Eisen for the "Anacreon," "Sappho," "Bion," and "Moschus," published in 1773, compete as masterpieces with the illustrations for Dorat's "Baisers" and "Fables." A later impression of them was disavowed by him because of the dull, grey look given to his exquisite work by badly worn-out plates. A staunch Royalist, he sank for years into obscurity, and was not made a member of the new Institute, but in 1814 he took up again the old title of Engraver to the King. His etching for "le Lever" (No. 20) after Baudouin is a standard performance.

Of a pliable nature as an artist, Massard accepted not only the advice, but even the retouches of Greuze, whose subtle tints, whose use and abuse of *lignes méplates* —flat lines to mark the transition from one to another surface—demanded the softest interpretation. In fact, while endeavouring under the Master's injunctions to transfer to the copper every stroke of the brush, he attempted to express too much.[1]

LA CRUCHE CASSEE

By J. Massard. After J. B. Greuze

LA LAITIÈRE

By J. C. Levasseur. After J. B. Greuze

LA LAITIERE.

LEVASSEUR (1734-1816), the pupil first of Beauvarlet, then of Daullé, took to the broad technique of the latter, as it enabled him to model the nude for which his knowledge of anatomy gave him a particular aptitude. He worked principally at vignettes after Gravelot, at portraits, and a few *genre* subjects scrupulously selected for morality's sake. With a vigorous touch he combined the most delicate handling of details. A still more delicate task for him was to appease the storms that troubled the married life of Greuze, his intimate friend.

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Massard's print is held by tradition as the official presentment of an ever-fresh type of beauty, that of Mme. Greuze, to which her husband's brushes never tired of reverting; a round, smooth brow, a pair of eyebrows set unusually apart, lending a candid expression to the countenance of an artful child, long eyelashes casting a caressing shadow on the lowered glances, a fine, wideawake, girlish nose, the oval of the face juvenile and full, the complexion velvety and rosy, an alluring plumpness of form. The obvious animalism of the blossoming creature is redeemed by a sentimental air, the expression of one whose thoughts are far away. There is nothing about her of a Chardin maiden, semi-monastically dressed, whose stiff home-made linen starched her very person.

More straight-laced on principle than the attire of his dainty model, Greuze apparently saw no more harm in a fanciful rustic *deshabillé* than in flimsy kerchiefs purposely torn to let a lassie's heart beat freely. Through super-subtleness he used simplicity as a provocative, and gave chastity a roguish mien. The white frocks of his village brides, the beaming modesty of attire so suitable to maidens weeping over a dead bird or a broken mirror, strike one as frisky enticements not far removed from the free and easy exhibitions of Lavreince's "Work girls rising and going to bed" (Nos. 256 and 257). Greuze's ingenuous heroines do not hang fire; they reflect the facile innocence of eighteenth-century Parisiennes, and the "Broken pitcher" may be taken to symbolize a general tendency towards *doubles ententes* dallying on the border line of delicacy.

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As public sympathy upheld the Master in his bickerings with the Academy, he took to holding private exhibitions, which became a fashionable function. A curious letter of Madame Roland,[2] dated September 1777, shows that Paris flocked to see "la Cruche cassée" at his studio, and that interest in art matters gradually extended from noblemen and financiers to the rising *bourgeoisie* of the time: "By "returning to Mr. Greuze's *atelier* I was agreeably reminded of the same pleasure "experienced two years ago. This time his large composition represents 'A Father's "curse.' As it would be endless to go into details, I shall merely mention that,

"notwithstanding the variety of passions truthfully and forcefully expressed, the "whole work does not produce the touching impression we felt before the next "canvas. Its subject accounts for the difference. I might criticize the Master for "being too lavish of greyish tints, had I not seen the same day another picture which "he showed us with eagerness. It represents a naive and charming girl, who has "just broken the jug she was carrying to the fountain. Her eyes are not staring, "her lips are but half open; she tries to account for the mishap and does not seem "to know whether she is to blame.

"Nothing could be prettier or more piquant; the only fault to find with Mr. "Greuze is that, judging by the expression of the girl's face, she is not so con- "cerned about the accident as to warrant that she will not be tempted again to "fetch a pail of water. I told him so; the joke amused us all. . . . We spent "three-quarters of an hour there, and I had him almost entirely to myself though "there were several visitors."

The success of the "Cruche," now at the Louvre, may be gauged not only by the fact that Madame du Barry was its first owner, but also by the number of authentic replicas mentioned in old catalogues. At the de Veri sale in 1785, one of them with a few alterations fetched 3,001 livres; at the Randon de Boisset sale, a pastel of the girl's head and shoulders, paired with the bust of the "Accordée du village," once the property of Mariette, was sold for 2,360 livres 1 sol, to drop to 15 francs when offered by itself at the Langlier sale in 1792. For a sketch of it also in pastels the sum of 2,600 francs was given at the dispersion of the Maison collection in 1869. A pen-and-wash drawing, the first idea of the composition, is entered under No. 3688 in the Paignon Dijonval catalogue.

"La Laitière," sold for 7,210 francs at an auction held by Henry and Laneuville in May 1821, eventually found its way to the collection of Baroness Nathaniel de Rothschild, who bequeathed it to the Louvre. A sketch, the Master's first thought of it, was bought for 410 francs at the Walferdin sale in 1880. A fine drawing of the head is at the Albertina in Vienna.

Ever since their appearance at an interval of ten years, both prints shared the popularity of the originals. The first, advertised by the "Avant coureur" of July 1773 as on sale for 6 livres at M. Greuze's, Rue Thibautode, was dedicated to Sophie Arnould, the famous interpreter of Rameau and of Gluck at the Opera. Portalis, who prefers "the beautiful work of Levasseur on 'la Laitière'"—very rare before the dedication—"to that of Massard, remarks that on the finished

"impressions of 'la Cruche' the painter's meticulous supervision over his "favourite engraver appears to have interfered with the brilliant rendering of the "flesh on a few early proofs, the luminosity of the unfinished state having been "spoilt by overwork."

Bourcard, never partial to Greuze, singles out "la Laitière" as desirable in any state, far above "la Cruche," and a few more plates which he patronizes only if unlettered. This exclusive preference, however, is modified in a foot-note, where he replaces "la Cruche" as well as "la Philosophie endormie" (No. 185) on a par with "la Laitière." Charming as the Milkmaid is, her nostrils, faultless in the picture, appear, as drawn by Levasseur, to be unduly pinched. The first edition of de Goncourt's "Art au XVIII[me] Siècle" includes an aquafortis reproduction of it.

The superb early proof of "la Cruche cassée" before us bears the unidentified collector's mark, "B. C."

[1] The author of a preface to "French XVIIIth Century Line Engraving" writes: "Massard's line is "apt to be a trifle weak and insecure; the sugary compositions of Greuze did not tend to improve his "faults."

[2] Jeanne Marie Philipon (1754-1793), a heroine of the Revolution, nourished in classic literature, full of Roman republican ideas, married Jean Marie Roland, an ardent Jacobin, who later on joined the party opposed to Robespierre. Madame ROLAND presided over an intellectual Salon. She perished by the guillotine, "fresh, calm, and smiling," and uttered on the scaffold the famous line: "O liberté, que de "crimes on commet en ton nom." On hearing of the sentence passed upon her, her husband committed suicide.

184.

LA PREMIÈRE LEÇON D'AMOUR

Engraved by NICHOLAS JOSEPH VOYEZ *l'aîné*

First state.

COLLECTORS of the engraved works of Greuze are urged by Bourcard to limit their search to impressions before letters, partly because the subjects are marked by a somewhat dull uniformity, partly owing to the fact that the popularity enjoyed by the Master called for an unparalleled number of impressions, most of which betray the worn-out condition of the plates.

The particular interest of this composition lies in the typically Greuzian choice of a lesson not necessarily prompting a moral, but implying the blend of sensuality and sentiment which appeared to Diderot as the alliance of morality with art, and for a time captivated the public. In this clever admixture Lady Dilke finds a point of contact between Baudouin and Greuze, "though the first "dedicated his gifts to the service of luxury and licence, the reaction against which "was turned to account by the second."

The intention of the "Première leçon" has much in common with that of "les Amours champêtres," engraved by Choffard after Baudouin.

185.

LA PHILOSOPHIE ENDORMIE

Etched by Moreau le Jeune in 1778

Bocher, No. 251 (Moreau le J.).

AMONG other incidents or accidents of his career, Moreau, who knew how to turn to account public infatuation even when he did not share it, tackled the so-called *gravure de composition* with his fine etchings of the "bonne Education" and the "Paix du ménage," finished by Ingouf. Nor did he stop at that pair as an interpreter of Greuze, for in 1777 the "Journal de Paris," after praising the "'Malediction paternelle,' the painter's *chef-d'œuvre*, the topic of "general conversation," stated that "at some distinguished gathering a famous "artist had volunteered to draw it off-hand, so as to allay the regret of those who "had not seen it." In the year following, the print of the "Malediction" was coupled with that of the "Fils puni," the object of the same enthusiasm: both plates being issued over the unusual notice in the annals of the craft: "engraved "from memory."[1]

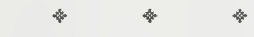
The famous artist mentioned in the paper was Moreau le Jeune. And although Greuze could never be his man, Greuze, whose drawing was too morbid for a sound artistic temperament, and whose canvases represented all sorts of cold emotions but good painting, yet Moreau did not give up working for a Master so loudly admired, and ten years later he etched the portrait of his spouse, an odd impersonation of philosophy asleep.

As an inmost presentment of the sitter's individuality caught napping on a midsummer afternoon, this picture takes precedence over "Cruches cassées, Voluptueuses, Baisers envoyés" (Nos. 182, 188, and 189), and other conventional likenesses of Mme. Greuze without distinct characterization.

Ensconced, almost sunk, into an easy chair—a *bergère*—she rests her head against the pillow tucked on the back of the seat. A loose cap, a *battant l'œil*—eye flapper—frames her blonde hair within white flimsy ruffles. The right arm lies on an open book, its perusal having lulled the lady to sleep by a table laden with philosophical folios from the stock of her late father, old Babuty, bookseller in the Rue St. Jacques. The left arm rests on her knees, where a pug dog with puckered muzzle, clipped ears, and fiery eyes keeps watch. A tambour frame and a reel of cotton have dropped by the side of two high-heeled slippers. Gabrielle slumbers.

Her limbs are relaxed within a quilted and frilled *deshabillé*, every fold of which underlines her indolence. The pose is still, the eyelids are closed; only the lips quiver, the bosom throbs. It is easy to divine what stuff this woman's dreams are made of.

The alluring youth of the languorous model vibrates through the suggestive image. It readily accounts for Greuze's foolish marriage to the sly creature and explains the infatuation of Blondel d'Azincourt, of Councillor St. Maurice, of more than one of the Master's apprentices, of a fruiterer's son, and other men besides.[2] The most intimate extant document on the ill-assorted matches of eighteenth-century artists is that drawn by Greuze himself in 1791 to show cause for his judicial separation from Philosophy awake. Infidelity after seven years of blind conjugal confidence, depravity, slaps in the face, saucepans coated with verdigris, embezzlement of money, utter neglect of children and home, every conceivable grievance against this shrew is substantiated in that distressing memoir. A curious sidelight is cast thereby on the artist's dealings with his engraved works. When Gabrielle saw that her husband was determined to part company with her she simply tore up the books of the association with Massard, Levasseur, Flipart, and Gaillard, so as to avoid having to account for the sums that had passed through her hands. The sudden shift did not prevent the magistrate from ascertaining that instead of keeping back fifty impressions each of seven different plates, to be divided, according to agreement, between herself as bookkeeper and the respective engravers, she had sold in every case as many as five hundred of them for her personal benefit.



There can be no more doubt as to the identity of the sitter than as to that of the etcher. Whoever attributed this wonderful etching to Greuze himself—an overrated compliment to him as an aquafortist—or more plausibly to Fragonard, forgot that in the first of the six volumes containing the complete works of Moreau le Jeune, bequeathed by his daughter to the Bibliothéque Nationale, is an impression similar to that before us, bearing the following contemporaneous annotation in pencil: "Madame Greuze gravée à l'eau-forte par Moreau, d'après le portrait par "Mr. Greuze, terminée au burin par Aliamet." Needless to add that the crispness of a preparation worthy of being compared to those of "le Couché de la mariée" and "le Modèle honnête" (Nos. 9 and 27) has been somewhat impaired in the finished state by a well-meaning burin that was not Simonet's.

The reputation of Lebas's pupil, J. ALIAMET (1726-1790), who had his own workshop in the Rue des Mathurins, rested mainly on plates after the Flemish masters and Joseph Vernet. Apart from the circumstance that he never interpreted any remarkable *genre* subject, it is well known that several engravers who had

given a few focussing touches to prints by their apprentices did not hesitate to sign them with their own name preceded by *sculpsit*. Now, as "Aliamet direxit" and his address were only written on the last two states of "la Philosophie," it is hardly unfair to surmise that he must have had little to do with it himself, or he would have omitted an uncalled-for Latin verb. Had he not inscribed in the same fashion a fine set of vignettes for "Pygmalion" after Eisen, bearing the signature of de Ghendt, a pupil of his who outdid the Master? That the third and fourth states are dedicated to Mme. Greuze "by her servant and friend Aliamet" does not settle the burinist's identity.

"Sic vos non vobis"—thus some do not toil for themselves—remarks Portalis, as Virgil did for Bathyllus.

No clue to the whereabouts of the picture is given by Messrs. de Goncourt, who describe it at length in their essay on Greuze and overlook it in the *catalogue raisonné* of his works. Neither do they enter it in that of Moreau, being solely concerned with the draughtsman's original compositions, but in a footnote they quote as "masterpieces" his etchings of the "Couché" after Baudouin, of the "Philosophie endormie" after Greuze. "Excessively rare and sought after," says Bourcard of the latter, as he points to an alteration introduced into the finished impression where the waistcoat worn by the lady, instead of being buttoned to the neck, is half open and shows a neckerchief.

On the reverse of the proof before us is one taken from the plate in the same state but not quite sufficiently inked. It is probable that as the proof would only be required for working purposes, the printer, not caring to waste a sheet of paper, turned it over, and after properly inking the plate took a fresh impression. Another such double etching state on the recto and verso, considered as a signal curiosity, was once in the Roux collection, now dispersed.

[1] In the "Letters from a foreign visitor in Paris to Sir Charles Lovers," published in 1779 and apparently written by Gaucher, who loved to make mischief among his fellow-craftsmen, reference is made to Moreau's etching of the "Malédiction" and the "Fils puni," also to Greuze's way of puffing his engraved works: "I could send you a couple of sketches of both compositions. Care has been taken to "state under each that they were engraved from memory. Prints done from memory put me in mind of "documents stolen from a friend's house. It is averred that friends at times are good enough to look the "other way, so as to facilitate the theft."

[2] Diderot had once borne witness to the charms of Mlle. Babuty. Wille, satisfied with the care bestowed by Greuze on his son's training, thought it well from time to time to offer handsome presents to Mme. Greuze. He notes in his Journal having sent Pierre Alexandre to his master's house with a silver coffee-pot on New Year's Day 1762, and there seems to be some hint of the lady's character in the words "she received him very well, of course," with which the entry concludes.

186.

LE TENDRE DÉSIR

Engraved by Manoel Salvador Carmona

First state.
Coat of arms of Marquis de Véri.

SALVADOR CARMONA (1730-1807), the best Spanish engraver of the century, was sent to perfect himself in Paris under Dupuis at the King's expense. Essentially academic but very skilled and versatile, he turned from religious to light subjects, worked for Eisen Senior and was received at the Academy on the merits of his portrait of Boucher after Roslin. Having become the son-in-law of Mengs, the Italianized German eclectic painter, whose conceptions of beauty were formed piecemeal and second-hand, he reproduced most of his works. Choffard himself would not have disowned some of Carmona's vignettes and frontispieces. Portalis and Beraldi quote "Tender yearning" as his most remarkable plate, to which Massard, who published it, put merely the engraver's initials, lest perhaps a foreign name should keep buyers away. And yet the handling of the superb border round the subject was so distinctly French in style and lightness of touch that, were it not for the Spanish character of the *putti* supporting the coat of arms, nothing about the treatment of the print would show the least streak of Castilian emphasis.

The name of "Coron" given by Bourcard as corresponding to the "C." of the burinist can only be a clerical error. In their extensive enumeration of Greuze's engraved works, Messrs. de Goncourt leave the initial C. uninterpreted, but refer to the provenance from Massard's shop "chez Massard," inscribed on later impressions of the "Tendre désir."

Through a most unusual proceeding, the arms of another nobleman were substituted in the second state for those of the Marquis de Véri, a noted art patron, at whose sale in 1785 the original picture fetched 1,101 livres, to drop to 381 francs in 1801 at the dispersion of the Tolozan collection. When first exhibited, the Salon catalogue had entered it as "A Girl's head expressive of desire," a title to be appropriately paraphrased as the usual Greuze maiden, lightly clad, whose bland features and tearful smile, whose uplifted eyes, languishing and set far apart, the Master reproduced over and over again: the prototype of Parisian sweet eighteen in the eighteenth century, a provocative sort of innocence on the verge of its fall.

The old copper-plate exists and modern reprints from it are to be obtained at the Louvre.

187.

LA TRICOTEUSE ENDORMIE

Engraved by CLAUDE DONAT-JARDINIER in 1765

First state.

DONAT-JARDINIER (1726-1774), one of the best pupils of Laurent Cars, engraved very little. The quality of his work makes up for quantity and shows a firm, crisp, agreeable burin. Portalis and Beraldi praise the perfect harmony of his "Tricoteuse."

At the La Live de Jully sale in 1769, the original canvas and its companion, a boy falling asleep on a school-book, fetched 1,540 livres. The "Tricoteuse" alone turned up at an auction held by the husband of Mme. Vigée Lebrun in the third Republican year and again at a sale in 1821, when it was knocked down for 3,500 francs. This unusually long price, considering the times, shows that the originality and strength which had revealed themselves in Greuze's pictures of children survived in the appreciation of amateurs throughout the reaction against eighteenth-century art. It is only in his so-called juvenile section that the inspiration of a true painter was untainted with the sensual sentimentalism and the fallacies of colour which spoiled his standard melodramatic compositions.

Messrs. de Goncourt add the following note to their enumeration of Greuze's works sold in his lifetime or shortly afterwards: "Every collector wanted the "picture of a girl or a boy by Greuze, and in the early part of the nineteenth century, "when Watteau himself was no longer entered into a catalogue, a child's bust by "Greuze had the honour to represent French art at the Louvre between a Poussin "and a Claude."

188.

LA VOLUPTUEUSE

Engraved by Robert Gaillard

Second state.

JUDGING by the respective engravings, this composition and "le Baiser envoyé" (No. 189), though not quite the same, were almost similar; but as only one of the two pictures has been preserved, it is impossible to state which came first, which was the replica. With slight alterations both show the same stimulus of sensuous charm, an enticing softness of mien, a dainty disorder of dress, a firm and brilliant play of light, vigorous and fresh flesh tints. These characteristics of the Master's favourite and slightly sheepish type of beauty were impersonated in real life by the alluring bashfulness of his wife, Gabrielle Babuty, whose liquid eyes had the sentimental expression—a drowned look, it was called—which in Greuze's single figures became rather sickly.

The original must have belonged to some wealthy amateur. On the lid of a Louis XVI snuff-box at the Louvre, reproduced in Molinier's "Mobilier Français du XVIIme et XVIIIme Siècle," is the miniature of a sumptuous interior, where "la Voluptueuse" can be easily recognized among other contemporary pictures on the walls. The catalogue of an anonymous sale of 22 May 1792 mentions a pastel by Greuze "caractérisant la volupté," probably a third version of the same subject in another medium. In 1839 Baron de Monville sold an oil painting of that description to Prince Demidoff, and when a portion of the San Donato gallery was dispersed in 1870, among seventeen busts and heads by Greuze, "la Voluptueuse" fetched 31,000 francs, unless indeed it was "le Baiser envoyé," which found its way eventually to the Rothschild collection at Seamore Place. Lady Dilke writes about it as the most seductive of Greuze's works, although as a piece of painting she prefers the first sketch for the "Cruche cassée" at the Edinburgh Gallery.

In England the second title ousted the first, though the Master did not apply them promiscuously to his two or three renderings of the composition. Charles Turner's fine mezzotint, now called "le Baiser envoyé," now "Expectation," was described in his sale catalogue of 1807 as the "Billet doux." Mr. Whitman, who thinks it may have been a private plate, remarks that with two exceptions all known impressions are cut at the foot, no special reason being assigned for this mutilation where the title occurs.

The superb border of ferns and flowers and the lovely *fleuron* with its appropriate couple of doves are the great attraction of Gaillard's interpretation. After sounding his wonted warning against modern reprints, Bourcard singles out this plate, "yet another portrait of the sly Gabrielle," among the most desirable of Greuze's engraved works: "in greater demand of recent years."

189.

LE BAISER ENVOYÉ

Engraved by Augustin de St. Aubin in 1771

The etching.
Bocher, No. 464 (various illustrations by A. de St. A.).

"I MUST say one word or two about an attractive picture which probably will "never be exhibited at the Salon. It is the New Year's gift of Mme. de "Grammont to Mr. de Choiseul. . . . Imagine a window looking on the street. "A green curtain half drawn before it: behind the curtain a fascinating girl who "has just risen from bed and has not had time to dress. Having received a note "from her lover who happens to pass under the window, she throws him a kiss." Thus in 1765 wrote Diderot.

Four years later, when the picture, contrary to his expectations, appeared at the Salon, the critic, who had fallen out with the painter, saw only the mannerism and thin quality with which the work, once in the Alfred de Rothschild collection, may be reproached in spite of its enticing charm. It is, indeed, in his single figures that Greuze is seen at his best, "though with all his powers of observation he "followed contemporary routine, in the clay-cold treatment of draperies."

The composition is but another version of "la Voluptueuse," one of several portraits of the artist's wife, engraved in a folio oval by Gaillard (No. 188). Basan committed this quarto size interpretation to Augustin de St. Aubin for insertion among the little prints which at the Choiseul sale inaugurated the practice of illustrated catalogues. Under No. 121 of the collection the text said: "A girl in a "chemise down to the knees forms the subject of the picture which gave so much "pleasure to the public when shown at the Louvre."

Bocher quotes two states of the etching where the work differs in the background and curtain. Of three finished states he remarks that the first is the least successful, on account of the harsh expression of the eyes which does not exist in the aquafortis preparations and has been subsequently atoned for. The size given by him of 2 ft. 6 in. by 3 ft. is obviously a mistake.

In 1893 Bourcard, who enumerated seventy-one prints after Greuze, placed against "le Baiser envoyé" a mark of interrogation in lieu of the engraver's name, hardly a pardonable omission in the case of St. Aubin. As an atonement in

his "Côte des Estampes" of 1912 he enters the work twice under the name of each artist with the mention-"very rare."

Impressions of this subject are scarce, since they had been limited to the "Recueil d'Estampes gravées d'après les Tableaux de Mgr. le Duc de Choiseul[1] "par les soins du Sr. Basan MDCCLXXI à Paris, chez l'auteur Rue et Hôtel "Serpente." The picture itself fetched 2,500 livres in the following year.

[1] The Duc de CHOISEUL (1719-1785), for many years Minister of Foreign Affairs under Louis XV till 1770, when he fell from power and retired to his Château of Chanteloup, displayed singular ability in redressing the dire consequences of the Seven years' War. France owes to him the cession of Corsica by the Genoese in 1768. A friend of Madame de Pompadour and a patron of Boucher, he formed a remarkable collection of pictures, thanks to the large fortune of his wife, a daughter of the financier Crozat. The New York Historical Society has a fine portrait of him by Greuze.

JEAN-GASPARD HEILMANN

190, 191.

LE BON EXEMPLE—MADEMOISELLE SA SŒUR

A pair engraved by Juste Chevillet

First state.

HEILMANN (1718-1760), an Alsatian painter, a friend of Wille, studied in Rome, where he was principally engaged in copying the academic and eclectic works of Domenichino, that Raphael of the Italian decadence. In Paris his over-finished portraits met with a fair amount of success; his colours were warm and clear, chiaroscuro was his *forte*, and he professed to work only from nature. Heilmann, most of whose pictures have been engraved, is best seen at the Mulhouse Museum.

As intensely French as was the burin of Chevillet, the quaint German character of these two graceful portraits—as Portalis and Beraldi call them—has clung to every inch of a literal interpretation which reminds one of Wille. Such still life passages as the spinning-wheel and the chairs have been admirably rendered. At the Behague sale in 1877 the impressions before us reached a "fantastic price," says Bourcard, who approves of this pair only in the first state. The subjects and the titles strike a domesticated note at variance with the average purport of French *genre* pictures, and show that under Louis XV fine prints would find their way even in the school and bedrooms of young ladies of quality.

L'AMANT ÉCOUTÉ

By L. M. Bonnet. After J. B. Huet

L'ÉVENTAIL CASSÉ

By L. M. Bonnet. After J. B. Huet

JEAN-BAPTISTE HUET

192, 193.

L'AMANT ÉCOUTÉ—L'ÉVENTAIL CASSÉ

A pair engraved by Louis Marin Bonnet, printed in colours

First state.

J. B. HUET (1745-1811), a pupil of Boucher and Le Prince, excelled as painter of landscapes and animals of a trim, bucolic order, not devoid of that genuine perception of nature which was singularly rare among French artists. Thence the peculiar charm of his drawings, which he forsook at one time to launch into a life-size group of Hercules and Omphale. The reception given by the public to his mythological attempt on a grand scale was such as to drive him back to his delightful rustications. Uncle and nephew, Demarteau and Bonnet, *alias* Marin, engraved almost the entire works of Huet who, a capital etcher himself, contributed, together with Moreau and Choffard, some fine *fleurons* to Choiseul-Gouffier's "Greek journey," besides interpreting on copper a few of his own compositions. Huet's three sons were engravers and painters of no mean merit.

This showy pair, together with "les Compliments" and "les Présents" (Nos. 194, 195) stands apart in the work of Huet, a specialist of pastorals treated with an altogether different technique. Moreover, the price of 2,850 francs fetched by the originals at the Mühlbacher sale, points to the inferiority of the pictures as compared with the corresponding colour prints, one of the sensations, in their exceedingly rare first states, of the Valentin collection sold in 1911. In the opinion of Mr. Danlos, the impressions before us are the most brilliant in existence, and show that Bonnet could carry so far the imitation of pastel as actually to reproduce its grain and the vague blurr of its dust.

Already, in 1893, Bourcard laid stress on the increasing demand for the masterpieces of this engraver, warning collectors against modern counterfeits. Lecœur in the eighteenth century had issued two smaller replicas of them, and "l'Amant écouté" was reproduced by F. E. Haid in mezzotint. There turned up at an auction in 1907 a curious trial proof of "l'Éventail," printed in colours without the blue plate.

194, 195.

LES COMPLIMENTS DU JOUR DE L'AN
LES PRÉSENTS DU JOUR DE L'AN

A pair engraved by Louis-Marin Bonnet, printed in colours

THE pair before us, bearing Nos. 1060 and 1061 of Bonnet's bulky catalogue, has rarity as its principal claim to admission in a discriminative collection. It shows Huet out of his element with interior scenes, though as a document of domestic life under Louis XVI both present a peculiar interest, and in that respect alone may be likened to Debucourt's far-famed "Bouquets" and "Compliments" (Nos. 82 and 83). The difference of decoration between the boudoirs and reception rooms dear to Baudouin and Lavreince, and the bed and morning rooms where parents and children met and felt at home is as striking as the dissimilarity of the respective subjects and by-plays.

At however early an hour New Year's greetings may have been exchanged in well-regulated families, the personal appearance of both father and mother in the first print is too untidy. As for the seasonable gifts of a clock and a porringer in the second, their workmanship differs considerably from that of the sumptuous articles of *virtu* with which we associate the period. The artist's notions appear to have been unaffected and strictly true to life.

The original drawings, once in the collection of Mr. S. Bardac, are now in that of Mr. Mortimer Schiff of New York.

196.

CE QUI EST BON À PRENDRE EST BON À GARDER

Engraved by ALEXANDRE CHAPONNIER

First state.

CHAPONNIER (1753-1824), a Swiss stippler of skill, but of trivial taste in the choice of his subjects, owed a certain amount of notoriety to a print of Bonaparte crossing the bridge at Arcole on horseback, contrary to all reliable information. The mention "after a sketch taken on the spot" added to the incongruity of so pretentious a composition, dedicated to the Italian armies.[1]

The original of "Ce qui est bon à prendre," painted on copper and signed "Huet 1776," was exhibited at the Salon under the title of "Tempting offers," although the unconcerned expression of the heroine suggests a determination to treat the purse she is holding as a friendly gift and not as a bribe, regardless of the gentleman's arguments.

[1] On 17 November 1796, Bonaparte, holding a flag at the head of his grenadiers, took by storm the bridge of Arcole on the Alpone, an affluent of the Adige, and defeated the Austrians.

197.

LE DÉJEUNER

Engraved and printed in colours by Louis-Marin Bonnet

Proof before all letters.

BOURCARD, who owned at one time this very proof, mentions it in "Dessins, gouaches, estampes, etc." as the gem of his collection. Indeed, the brilliance of the impression is on a par with the rarity of the state before letters and numbers. Otherwise a comparison with its companion "le Goûter" (No. 15) after Baudouin is detrimental to "le Déjeuner" as showing Huet out of his element whenever he launched from his characteristic pastoral compositions into *genre* subjects and tried to be unnecessarily humorous, as he did to a greater extent in "le Dîner" and "le Souper" for the same set.

The artist's conception of the morning meal in the country might have been turned by some fashionable cleaner into an attractive advertisement. Here was an Abbé endeavouring to get a spot out of a young woman's gown; his efforts, of absorbing interest to a young gentleman, seem to distress a boy, probably the culprit, who bursts into tears. Meanwhile it takes two maids to lay a tray on a small table. As long as the cleaning is successful, what does it matter if breakfast is late?

JEAN-BAPTISTE ISABEY

198.

MARIE-LOUISE, EMPRESS OF THE FRENCH

Engraved by MONSALDY in 1814; printed in colours

Second state.

TWO such contrary masters as Dumont and David initiated ISABEY (1767-1855) into the graces of the old school and the classicalness of the new, with the result that the pupil shunned artificiality, and being satisfied with moderate effects, adopted a simple manner. By natural bent a portraitist, although the times offered a unique chance to painters of history, he preferred the certainty of being first in his own line to the probability of coming second in any other. As he gave lessons first to Hortense Beauharnais, then to the Empress Marie-Louise, he seized the opportunity that made him pre-eminently the miniaturist of Napoleon I, by whose commands he had already produced three small *chefs-d'œuvre*: "Bonaparte in the Malmaison gardens,"[1] a "Review by the First Consul," and the "Coronation at Notre Dame." As a director of the Sèvres manufactory, he managed to hold his appointment under various *régimes* and to obtain a pension from each. Having accompanied Talleyrand to Vienna in 1815, his drawing of the Congress had an international success and is still in the engraving a standard article of diplomatic wall decoration.

Isabey's best portraits date from the Directoire, when daring and beautiful *Incroyables*, rivals of Tallien and Josephine, flocked to his studio. A certain uniformity of composition, the Davidian avoidance of all ornamental background, make his miniatures somewhat monotonous; so does the constant recurrence of an airy scarf thrown round the heads of his Empresses, ladies-in-waiting, queens of song and of tragedy.

MONSALDY (17?-18?), now an almost forgotten stippler, owed a certain measure of success to six cleverly etched views of the Paris Salons from the sixth to the tenth Republican year. He set in each a crowd of quaintly dressed visitors within an exaggerated perspective, which shrank and lengthened the pictures on the walls as if they came out of a rolling machine, thus appropriately caricaturing the works of David's followers, to whom the Master had abandoned the rooms of the Louvre, in order to hold private exhibitions of his own.

Portalis mentions among several portraits engraved by Monsaldy a pretty medallion in octavo of Lady Hamilton after Romney and that of Marie-Louise, his best stipple of colour.

MARIE-LOUISE (1791-1847), a daughter of Francis II of Austria and second wife of Napoleon I, was the typical narrow-minded Viennese of fresh disposition, lacking the qualities that make for distinction. Her artistic training was not deficient, but her education had been conducted on such prejudiced lines as would debar from the lessons of this niece of Queen Marie Antoinette any reference to the Revolution.

If Josephine with her Creole graces had disciplined the rough, soldierly *entourage* of Bonaparte, the etiquette of the new court became more stately for the sake of Marie-Louise; otherwise her influence in France was of no account. In 1810, during the honeymoon, Metternich wrote: "The Emperor is so evidently "in love with his nineteen year old bride that he subordinates to her wishes his "customary ways of life." Napoleon's joy was complete when she bore a son destined to bear the empty title of King of Rome. In January 1814, after the Leipzig defeat, she was appointed to act as Regent—a circumstance mentioned under her portrait after Isabey—though she never ventured to express a personal opinion or even less so to come to any decision. Four months after, on the Emperor's first abdication, she succeeded in reaching her father, having refused to comply with her husband's entreaties to join him at Elba. During the Hundred days she remained in Austria, and at the Congress of Vienna was awarded the Duchy of Parma and Piacenza, without reversion to her son, brought up as a member of the House of Hapsburg under the supervision of Metternich. Then, having shaken off all associations with the Bonapartes, she seemed to forget she had ever borne the name of the fallen Corsican, and soon after his death the former Empress of the French became the morganatic wife of General Neipperg. In 1832 she was in Vienna when her son, Napoleon II, passed away.

Although Parma had become practically an Austrian outwork, Marie-Louise ruled there with a moderation lacking in other Italian states in that time of reaction.

[1] This fine drawing has been recently removed from Versailles to its appropriate setting, the Malmaison. A room at the Louvre is entirely given over to works of Isabey.

FRANÇOIS JANINET

(1752-1813)

ALTHOUGH his aeronautic exertions had been the laugh of Paris, JANINET, who styled himself a physicist,[1] took a genuine interest in the scientific questions mooted by the Encyclopaedists and extending even to the graphic arts. He it was who, by applying colour instead of the wash laid by the inventors of aquatint on the varnish covering an etched plate, and by subdividing over various plates the method discovered by Le Blon (1667-1741), counter to Newton's ideas and distorted by the Dagotys, brought about the improvements which paved the way for the triumph of Debucourt.

Better than Charpentier, Le Prince, Saint-Non, and Stapart, who had recourse to acids to bite the copper over and over again, Janinet, and next to him Regnault, Guyot, and Descourtis, obtained the softest gradations from white to black and a varied intensity of shades with a process practised since 1758 by François as well as by Blondel d'Azincourt. Owing to the patient and subtle use of many more tools they also secured a greater number of fine impressions.[2]

To reproduce the transparency of a tinted drawing or give the illusion of a *gouache*, Janinet pinned on the paper, one after the other, as many copper-plates of even size as the subject had colours, by means of keys which often left crosswise marks on the margins of the print.[3] On the first he aquatinted the entire composition with its shadows and obtained a trial proof resembling a finished wash drawing in black, bistre, or grey. Each successive plate received each different chromatic part to be imprinted on the work, beginning with the primary colours: *red* that enlivens the picture and strengthens the gamut of browns; *blue* that contributes to transient and fleeting effects; *yellow* that helps iridescent hues. Green was next produced by superposing blue and yellow; yellow combined with red gave a shade partaking of both, and so on for the other compound colours, the white background of the paper providing the lights.[4]

In 1775 the artist described his first little print "l'Opérateur" after Benazech,

as "engraved in imitation of *lavie*—aquatint—in colours by F. Janinet, the only "one who has found this manner."

"As an imitation the style was new," remark Messrs. Vuaflart and Herold; "not so the process. There was no essential difference with that already used by "Bonnet, and the fact of obtaining a finer grain with the same tools amounted to "an adaptation rather than to a discovery. Moreover, Van Amstel at Amsterdam "had previously arrived at the identical results by means of the so-called soft "ground—*gravure en teinte au vernis mou.*"

Having groped about yet awhile, often resorting to the brush to re-touch and heighten his impressions, the efforts and progress of Janinet were gradually evidenced by a few country and domestic scenes after Wille or Freudenberger, some Roman monuments after Hubert Robert, the portrait of Marie Antoinette within a blue and gold mount, and several views of Paris after Demachy. In 1777 he arrived at the perfect interpretation of Fragonard's warm and delicate ovals, "l'Amour" and "la Folie" (Nos. 201, 202), and from that time, until the deleterious influence of the Revolution, his dexterity never faltered. Under his fairy-like touch the faces light up and smile, the flesh assumes the glow of life; a vaporous sky or a hazy background set off white dresses which strike a gay note against the foliage or within pretty but not over-decorated interiors. Thus a few portraits, three probably after his own drawings, intended either to be set on lids of snuff boxes or to be framed, rise above the category of *simili* miniatures: they are "Janinet portraits," small masterpieces, achievements apart; rarest of all, "Sophie Wilhelmine" (No. 215), a gem.[5]

It is when dealing with boudoir subjects after Lavreince that Janinet is at his best. The success of the little Swedish master, whose training had been defective, was largely due to the knowledge and artistic probity of two among his French interpreters. If "la Comparaison, l'Aveu, l'Indiscrétion," the three best compositions of Lavreince—or should we say the four, with "la Joueuse de guitare"?—are quoted as the most pleasing colour-prints any collector can wish for, it is because Janinet amended the deficient modelling of the originals and gave the figures represented a suppleness of outline in keeping with the Baudouin-like spirit of each picture. With his single-toned technique N. de Launay did the same for "l'heureux Moment," for "qu'en dit l'Abbé."

"The modish marionettes," writes Lady Dilke, "daintily staged in equivocal "situations, who furnished the painter with his favourite themes, lent themselves

"with facility to the skill of the colour engraver. Lavreince cannot handle full "strong hues without heaviness, but white frocks and blue ribbons, the roses and "feathers of the ladies who accept 'tempting offers' or show signs of 'tardy "repentance' are well within his scope. In these suggestive romances the airy "dress or undress of the heroines, the faint blues of their bed curtains, the violet "coats of their lovers, afford the very tones which are the most effectively handled "in this medium. Janinet's reproductions of the two *gouaches*, 'la Comparaison' "and 'l'Aveu,' imitate the execution of Lavreince in the most deceptive manner, "and are veritable triumphs of his graceful and pleasing art. With them may be "ranked the clever print in which he reproduced Hoin's portrait of Mme. Dugazon "as 'Nina' (No. 212)."

It seems almost incredible that after 1791 a process so skilfully perfected and suitably applied should have served Janinet to reproduce the "Taking of the civic oath," the "Death of Lucretia," and the "Conspiracy of Catilina," dull compositions betraying a change of interest, a decline of the mastery over the engraver's own methods. "David's dictatorship accounts for the loss of many a brilliant "individuality swept clear of the convictions and practices of a lifetime by the "necessity of showing allegiance to a new creed, and of undertaking hack work so "as to make both ends meet. The decadence of Janinet is no more to be wondered "at than the poverty and neglect into which, one by one, Moreau, St. Aubin, and "Debucourt had fallen."

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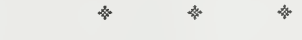
Colour prints turned out by a super-subtle artist owed, no doubt, a large measure of their success to the highly seasoned taste of amateurs, who took to them as an alluring compromise between pictures and drawings. The *blasé* mood of Farmers-general, whose free indulgence in luxury exerted so much influence over painters, sculptors, and architects, relished languid tints suited to the suggestive rendering of drawing-room scenes almost as much as *gouache*, and far better than black-and-white engravings. Mechanically handled, the process yielded mediocre results, but under the tools of a Janinet, who knew how to arrive at the harmonious blending of the spectrological elements of his art, such unexpected and striking effects would be obtained as, for instance, the shot-green garment worn by one of the "Indiscrétion" heroines, or the fireworks on the gown of the guitar player (Nos. 205 and 206). Unfortunately plates so elaborately wrought proved to be frail

and sensitive articles of wall decoration which, if unprotected, would soon lose their lustre and gradually pale.

To appreciate fully the modelling of Janinet's heads, the pearly hues, the mellowness of his prints dating from 1777 to 1789, one must examine such impressions as it has been given to very few collectors to secure and, having secured them, to guard against injudicious exposure and handling. In the condition known as that of the "Janinet portfolio," they are the last word of perfection.



In his essay, "La Gravure en couleurs," Portalis wrote: "Fifteen years ago "the discovery was made in Alsace of a portfolio containing nothing more or less "than Janinet's collection of his own proofs—*à fleur de coin*—in a state of preser- "vation infinitely superior to that of any impression known until then; 'l'Oiseau "privé,' among them, of surprising freshness, 'Ah laisse-moi donc voir,' a "translucid enamel showing two lovers stranded on the most awkward path of a "park. . . ."

As the precious find dated from 1878, eleven (not fifteen) years had elapsed when Portalis referred to it in 1889. A regular curio hunter named Hemmerdinger, whose family still lives at Nancy, having heard that at Haguenau in Alsatia an old maid, Mlle. Ufel, owned a certain number of eighteenth-century engravings, inherited by her father from a sister, or a lady friend of Janinet—the exact relationship has not been ascertained—opened negotiations with her. As the family considered some of the subjects unseemly and had already destroyed a portion, the purchase was easily arranged. The disbursement amounted to a few thousand francs, and Hemmerdinger was granted the facility of taking delivery according to the requirements of his sale, when an intermediary having introduced the business to Mr. A. Danlos in Paris, the deal was closed at once. Baron E. de Rothschild and Mr. A. Chistophle had the first choice of the sensational treasure trove. Such is the pedigree of fourteen among the gems of the collection described in this catalogue: seven prints after Lavreince, viz.: "Ah laisse-moi donc voir" in two states, the well-nigh unique "Joueuse de guitare," forming a quartette with the "Comparaison, l'Aveu, l'Indiscrétion," and the fascinating pair of "Joli chien" and "Petit conseil"; two after Fragonard: "l'Amour, la Folie"; two after Le Barbier: "la Venus aux colombes, la jeune Vestale"; one after

Lagrenée: "l'Offrande à l'amour"; another probably after Boilly: "l'Oiseau privé"; and last, not least, the portrait of a young princess after an unknown original.

While classical prints are always classified under the names of the respective engravers, English and French prints dating from the eighteenth century, essentially a century of interpretation, are indexed by common consent under the corresponding painters and draughtsmen. In vain has it been tried to catalogue all engravings with a uniform method according to their etchers or burinists, tradition and the beaten track have proved stronger than logic. In the re-arrangement, however, of the Christophle collection, in consideration of a unique provenance, it seemed particularly fit to enter Janinet's prints, selected by him for his portfolio, under his own heading, irrespective of the painters, even of Fragonard, and to add to them a few impressions of the finest quality subsequently acquired.

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Next to Janinet two engravers may be quoted as reflecting his technical gifts: Descourtis, his best pupil, who interpreted with fine intuition Taunay's "Noce, Foire, Rixe," and "Tambourin" (Nos. 320-323); Sergent, whose "Il est trop tard" (No. 314) is a performance of singular excellence. What of Debucourt, whose prints are his pictures, whose powers of observation have handed down to us some valuable contemporary documents? It would be unfair to draw a comparison between the French painter-engraver *par excellence* and a professional engraver, however eminent. One brought into colour-printing, besides his training as a *genre* painter, the creative powers which put life and movement into his every group. Add to it the knack of a supreme craftsman, and from every impression of "les deux Baisers," "le Menuet," "les Compliments," and "les Promenades," something of a master stands out and has never been equalled. The other was neither an observer nor a painter of manners by inclination. With infinite skill and taste he has interpreted for the delight of amateurs some of the favourite compositions of the day. His drawing is so correct, his colours are so delicate, that Janinet outdoes Lavreince, Hoin, Lagrenée, and with the "printed pictures" of "l'Amour" and "la Folie" he has a share in the spell of Fragonard.[6]

[1] His successful experiments on the combinations of colours and the remarkable results shown on his plates justified a title which was only turned into ridicule by an attempt to rival Montgolfier and force his way into the air. Janinet's disasters as an aviator are recounted in Wille's diary of 11 July 1784: "A

"Sunday devoted to floating the balloon made by the Abbé Miollan and M. Janinet, the engraver. This "machine, the largest of all those previously sent up, was to start from the Luxembourg garden. As it was "a lovely day, I proposed to my wife to take her there for 3 livres a head. The two inventors, the Marquis "d'Arlande, and a mechanic, were to take part in the ascension, but my wife would not risk herself in such "a crowd as would be there. We therefore went to a gardener of our acquaintance on the new Boulevard ". . . great many people were there too. The machine should have gone up at midday, but the inventors, "apparently through ignorance, having been unable to fill it with gas, managed to set fire to it. All we saw "from where we sat was a thick smoke; the whole apparatus being burnt to ashes."

Miollan and Janinet had to fly for their lives: the crowd tore down the barrier and threw scaffoldings and chairs into the fire which raged for four and twenty hours. "The next day," adds Wille, "and through-"out the week nothing was sold and sung but satirical ballads on the aeronauts, one entitled: 'I shall get "'my six livres back in wreckage': at the same time several prints appeared to make them as ridiculous "as possible." The public heard no more of the Abbé Miollan; Janinet went back to his copper-plates and made up for the rash venture with "la Comparaison, l'Aveu, l'Indiscretion."

[2] Guyot's inventory included one hundred and eighty between roulettes, cradles, scrapers, etc.

[3] Though the impression may have been obtained with several plates, four key marks are not necessarily visible. Janinet's "Three Graces" after Pellegrini show only one mark on top of the print.

Being given the meticulous care implied by the process, seeing the unerring precision of the results achieved with the press, Janinet must have relied on an intelligent printer and a man of taste, all in one. In this connection two rival names are on record: those of Blin and of Chapuy, the second principally favoured by Debucourt.

[4] In French technical parlance coloured prints—*coloriées*—are colour prints obtained by means of one plate, viz., with a plate inked only once, either *au pouce*—with the thumb—or *à la poupée*—with a rag or doll, while colour prints—*estampes en couleur*—are those printed from as many plates as there were primary or compound colours on the subject.

Janinet did not mix his colours with walnut but with poppy oil, a better drier, giving greater lustre and transparency.

[5] Of six portraits engraved by Janinet those of Queen Marie Antoinette, of Mlle. Bertin, her milliner, and of Mme. de St. Huberti, an actress, are almost certainly after his own *gouaches*; those of Mlle. Duthé (du T . . .) and Mlle. Colombe are after Lemoine: the original of the rarest, the so-called "Little Sophie Wilhelmine," bearing no artists' names, has been variously attributed to Lavreince, to Hall, and to the engraver himself.

[6] With the exception of the notice included in the reference work of Portalis and Beraldi on eighteenth-century engravers, no separate monograph has yet appeared on François Janinet nor a *catalogue raisonné* of his works. In pre-war days Mr. de Novion had one in course of preparation; may he bring it to a conclusion.

L'AGRÉABLE NÉGLIGÉ

By F. Janinet. After P. A. Baudouin

199.

L'AGRÉABLE NÉGLIGÉ

After PIERRE ANTOINE BAUDOUIN

Proof before all letters printed in colours.
Bocher, No. 28.

IT is not possible to say which of the two different interpretations of the same *gouache* came first, this or the "léger Vêtement" by Chevillet (No. 33); the only date in point being that of 29 December 1779, when the "Journal de Paris" advertised the issue of the "Négligé" by Janinet after Baudouin, to be had for 4 livres at Basan and Poignant's, printsellers. The plate was the best of a showy set of four, including "l'aimable Paysanne" after Saint Quentin, "la compagne de Pomone, la Réunion des plaisirs" both after Le Clerc. This particular subject must have caught the popular taste, for besides Chevillet's version of it under a different title, it was also engraved in smaller size as "la jeune Flore."

Portalis and Beraldi mention both prints by Janinet and by Chevillet without any reference to dates or states. Goncourt enters "le léger Vêtement" among the *sujets galants* after Baudouin, not so the "Négligé," which, on the other hand, is included alone in "Mes Estampes" of Mr. Beraldi.

200.

AH! LAISSE-MOI DONC VOIR

Engraved after NICOLAS LAVREINCE, printed in colours

First and second states.
From Janinet's own portfolio of prints.
Bocher, No. 2.

"EXQUISITELY executed," says Beraldi.

Better than the verdant setting of the little scene, over and above the large plumed hat and the white gown, favourite articles of apparel in the wardrobe of Lavreince's light-hearted heroines, the naive curiosity expressed by the young woman, the humorous embarrassment betrayed by her gallant, single this composition out of all the engraved works of the Swedish master with an unusual touch of genuine psychology. When in the third state of the print the object in dispute between the two lovers was transformed into a portrait and the title became "Bois d'amour," the unaltered by-play of the respective expressions would hardly fit the plausibility of a chastened subject.

Besides an old inferior variant under the name of "Serment amoureux," by Venzo, modern reprints of Janinet's interpretation find a good market.

AH! LAISSE-MOI DONC VOIR

By F. Janinet. After N. Lavreince

L'AMOUR

By F. Janinet. After J. H. Fragonard

LA FOLIE

By F. Janinet. After J. H. Fragonard

201, 202.

L'AMOUR—LA FOLIE

A pair engraved in 1777 after JEAN HONORÉ FRAGONARD, printed in colours

Second states.
From Janinet's own portfolio of prints.

FAR from reaching perfection at one stroke in the imitation of aquatint, Janinet had to grope about for some time and touch up his plates by hand, as witness a remarkable portrait of Queen Marie Antoinette, on whose cheeks the process fell short of the adequate rouge, and the brush spread it to excess. After repeated failures and innumerable trials, the opalescent colour which distinguishes the artist's best works first showed itself unimpaired in the interpretation of Fragonard's "Love" and "Folly," of which Lady Dilke writes, as if no names were inscribed upon them, that "they are attributed to Janinet on the evidence "afforded by their execution."

If the satiny look of the medallions before us did not speak for their superlative condition, and if the provenance was not a sufficient hall-mark of quality, what better evidence could be desired of a selection made among the most brilliant impressions than the engraver's autograph signature at the back of "la Folie," always the finest and airiest of the pair?[1]

Bourcard misses here a golden opportunity for silence. Already, in 1893, after denouncing "modern reimpressions on old paper, perpetrated with disturbing "accuracy," he wondered at the prices fetched by two prints which he refused to class among the best achievements either of Fragonard or of Janinet. Again, in 1912, before the unabated demand for such "insipidities, the trashiest conceptions "in creation, sketched, reproduced, copied by every painter and draughtsman . . ." he endeavoured to ascertain why amateurs should persist in enthusing before them. Having elicited from his common sense a partial explanation, that of the artistic paternity of both Cupids, he failed to be impressed by it, but went on pining for more breadth and inspiration, as if Fragonard and Janinet should be expected to utter the thoughts of Leonardo, Dürer, or Rembrandt.[2] A curious case of short-sightedness on the part of an author whose life-long study has been centred in eighteenth-century prints, not to recognize in the wanton charm and blitheness of "Love" and "Folly" the fit symbols of life's light comedy before the

Revolution. With a touch of theatrical unreality one Cupid personifies eternal youth; roses by his side breathe endless spring, above his head two amorous doves are on the wing. While the hours float by on waves of laughter, Folly deadens the alarm of impending terror by scattering bells from her bauble over the rich, the revellers, the careless, whom she deceives into lingering within the groves of pleasure.

No work of Fragonard enjoyed greater popularity. Judging by the many authentic replicas with different mediums, commissions for the pair must have followed one another. "L'Amour" alone is entered in the Randon de Boisset catalogue of 1777. In 1781 a sketch for "la Folie" in bistre fetched 18 livres at the Sireul sale, but E. de Goncourt states that the Master had reproduced both compositions in water-colours touched up with *gouache* for the purpose of having them engraved. The same water-colour of "la Folie," signed in full, which in 1860 was loaned by Mr. E. Marcille to an exhibition, turned up in 1887 at the Nadaillac sale and fetched 810 francs. The two pictures together, probably the pair now in the Alphonse de Rothschild collection, had been sold in 1785 for 427 livres at the sale of the Marquis de Veri and again at that of Mr. de Villeminot in 1810. In the sixth year of the Republic "Threatening love," as it was called, fetched 35 francs at auction, to reappear in 1817 at the Constantin sale, next to "l'Amour-Folie," a tinted drawing of which was sold for 7,000 francs in 1895. At the second Mühlbacher sale, "l'Amour" in oils fetched 15,000 francs; the same subject with slight alterations, once in the Dannat collection, was sold for 30,000 francs by Sedelmeyer in 1907, and at an anonymous sale held in April 1911, the *gouaches* of both "l'Amour" and "la Folie" were knocked down for 35,000 francs. In every case the plump forms of "Love," more so than those of "Folly," present at the ankles and wrists the india-rubber chubbiness with which Boucher was wont to endow his amorini.

There is also a smaller reproduction of "la Folie" in aquatint; engraver unknown.

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Edmond de Goncourt wrote: "On Love's burning altar both the imagination "and the palette of Fragonard were bound to catch fire and surround the little God "with the blaze of an apotheosis. On two colour-prints by Janinet, glimmering like "water under the sun, two Cupids stand out in full relief against the combined "azure and purple of a triumphal sky."

[1] The signature of the widow Avaulez, the editress, is sometimes found at the back of either print, followed by a reference number.

[2] With regard to the hackneyed influence of Love in eighteenth-century art, Bourcard's humanities overlook a French epigram as old as the hills: "Whoever you are, there's your Master: he is, has been, or "is about to be."

LA COMPARAISON

By F. Janinet. After N. Lavreince

L'AVEU DIFFICILE

By F. JANINET. After N. LAVREINCE

L'INDISCRÉTION

By F. Janinet. After N. Lavreince

203-205.

LA COMPARAISON—L'AVEU DIFFICILE—L'INDISCRÉTION

Engraved after NICOLAS LAVREINCE, the first in 1786, the second in 1787, the third in 1788; printed in colours

First and second states of each.
The second state of "la Comparaison" and first states of "l'Aveu difficile" and "l'Indiscrétion" from Janinet's own portfolio of prints.
Bocher, Nos. 12, 8, and 30.

BY conveying with his mellow process the illusion of a transparent water-colour rather than of an opaque *gouache*, Janinet turned the happiest conceptions of Lavreince into three of the most alluring prints of the French school. The set illustrates three chapters in the history of two bosom friends: first a competition in private before the dressing table, then from one of the rival beauties the awkward admission symbolized by a rose no longer in full bloom and meeting with such poor consolation as "I told you so"; next a scuffle for the letter that may reveal a man's name and satisfy the curiosity of a confidante.

A generation of Frenchmen had forgotten this trio when, in 1859, an impression of "la Comparaison" fetched 60 francs at auction, and the "Gazette des Beaux Arts" mentioned it as "the finest of a series of old illuminated engravings "which had just come in for an inexplicable success." From that time dates the rediscovery of Janinet's three masterpieces, although at the Raffé sale in 1864 two superb impressions of the first and the second did not fetch more than 22 and 40 francs respectively.

No controversial literature has developed around the technicalities of the "Comparaison," since its two states present no difference of detail. Upon "l'Aveu," however, the standard authority of Bocher is at fault, for it does not record one of the impressions before us showing the plate focussed, its key perfectly pitched, after the skirt of the seated figure, the curtain, and the sheet spread on the carpet [1] had been touched up and the whole work was framed within a double line; probably because the first trial proofs had not proved quite satisfactory. In the state to which we refer only the back leg of one of the chairs had yet to be inserted, in order to

account for a corresponding shadow already put in; but again Bocher has overlooked an addition which marks the third state, to be followed by a fourth fully lettered.

At the Mühlbacher sale in 1881, undue importance appears to have been attached to a unique impression of "l'Aveu," where the dress of the standing figure printed in lilac was merely the evidence of an experiment discarded by Janinet, when he arrived at the definitive blue shade in harmony with his colour scheme.

"L'Indiscrétion," in old catalogues "la Lettre," is a bolder symphony of red, blue, and green; two shades of red being set in contrast, without clashing, between the hat and the gown of one of the heroines; the white *déshabillé* of the other revealing an underwork worthy of Debucourt at his best:[2] the heads exquisitely modelled, the milky flesh tints laid with a limpidity never attained with *gouache* mediums. The left foot thrown back by the figure reaching forward from the arm-chair is accordingly invisible in the first state, but Janinet added it in the second, probably because the action represented was too momentary to account for the permanent omission of one foot in the picture. Two curls encircling the brow of the same figure were subsequently inserted by the artist on his plate. Bourcard quotes an impression of "l'Indiscrétion" in black as a fourth state besides the three entered by Bocher.

The close similarity of the subject and the priority of the date of "la Comparaison" are generally held as detrimental to the importance attached by collectors to Debucourt's "Oiseau ranimé," which should hardly be looked upon as an original composition. Vuaflart and Herold assert it as "well known that "Debucourt revived Janinet's lax subject of 'la Comparaison,' issued in 1786, to "engrave the year following 'l'Oiseau ranimé' after his own water colour." Likewise E. Dacier: "in 1787, the standard year of Debucourt as an engraver, he "gives 'l'Oiseau ranimé' linked by subject and size with Janinet's questionable "set of 'l'Aveu, l'Indiscrétion, la Comparaison.'" If this be to a minor extent a case of plagiarism, Lavreince rather than Janinet should be named as plaintiff.

To Chapuy, the collaborator of Janinet, was due a reversed reproduction of the "Comparaison" somewhat smaller in size, where the pert expression on the faces, the admirable drawing of the hands, are missing. In 1787, an oval adaptation of it by Partout was issued for the English market, regardless of orthography in the title of "the Comparaison" and of prosody in a doggerel attached to it: "While "blooming youth and gay delight Upon the rosy *cheeck* appear. . . ." "L'Aveu," reduced in size by Brion, was also engraved by Chapuy as "la Réponse embarrassante."

If we judge from an advertisement in the "Mercure de France," it would seem that the publishers of the lively triptych relied principally on the success of the "Indiscrétion": "The reputation won by the engraver with his discoveries in the art "of colour printing will be greatly enhanced by this piquant and amusing scene "interpreted with such refinement, now on sale for nine livres."

Portalis and Beraldi mention the set as "the finest, the most sought after of "Janinet's engraved works." The provenance of the three impressions in this collection is inestimable.

[1] While ladies were having their hair done, a sheet would be spread before the toilet table to avoid sprinkling the carpet with powder.

[2] The seated figure in each group wears the white morning gown or *gaulle*, especially favoured by Lavreince.

206.

LA JOUEUSE DE GUITARE

After NICOLAS LAVREINCE, printed in colours

Only state.
From Janinet's own portfolio of prints.

UNPUBLISHED for some unexplained reason in the eighteenth century, undescribed in Bocher's *catalogue raisonné*, unknown to collectors until 1878, when four impressions of it came to light, this plate was apparently intended to make up an even set with "la Comparaison, l'Aveu, l'Indiscrétion" (Nos. 203, 204, and 205). Even if we did not know the original painted on panel to be perhaps the only undisputed work by Lavreince now extant in Paris; even if we did not take into account that Lavreince's favourite interpreter was Janinet, the paternity of this phœnix among prints would be established by its provenance from a portfolio preserved for over half a century in the engraver's family and containing an exclusive selection of his works. But leaving that evidence aside and since Debucourt devoted his own process of colour printing—a stronger one, no doubt—to the reproduction of no other subjects but what he had painted himself for the purpose, whose hand, if not Janinet's, could have performed such a feat of virtuosity as the chatoyant reflection on the gown worn by the guitar player, technically a finer achievement than the opalescent transparency of pink through white in the "deux Baisers" (No. 84)? While on the picture the "Joueuse" wore a dress of the same green as the standing figure in the "Indiscrétion," the engraver altered that shimmering hue for a deeper and more lustrous shot-green, known as *mordoré*, in order to add variety to the chromatic effect of his four plates and to eschew any semblance of sameness.

No sooner had the precious portfolio of Janinet found its way to Paris than four collectors secured the only known specimens of this Guitarist. The event among *cognoscenti* must have been kept quiet, for Portalis and Beraldi, writing in 1881 on Janinet, referred summarily to the conflicting attributions given to an unlettered ultra-rare engraving in quarto—*d'après divers*, *rarissime*—then about to make its first official appearance on the market at the dispersion of the collection of Mr. Mailand, one of the privileged buyers of the signal rarity, three years before. His impression presented the additional peculiarity of being printed on either side of the paper with "la Joueuse" on one, "la Comparaison" on the other, to the

LA JOUEUSE DE GUITARE

By F Janinet. After N. Lavreince

detriment of the brilliance of both but to the support of the theory that the two compositions belonged to the self-same set. The double-headed copy passed then to Mr. Baudet, at whose sale in 1892 it was bought by Mr. Fenaille, its present owner, who lent it in 1906 to the Bibliothèque Nationale, where it became the sensational attraction of a memorable exhibition of colour prints.

In 1893 Bourcard had mentioned the Baudet impression as representing "a "young woman playing the mandoline before a table; very rare, unknown to "Bocher." He referred to it more fully in 1912: "the exhibition held in May 1906 "included an unpublished, unknown plate by Janinet after Lavreince belonging to "Mr. Fenaille, the great collector. It represents a young woman standing, looking "down, holding a guitar; behind her an open work-table; to the left on the "foreground an overthrown armchair. . . . The engraving is not unique, for "Mr. Christophle possesses another specimen of it." Bourcard should have added that a third belongs to Count de Greffuhle. It has not been possible to trace the owner of the fourth.

In the background of the composition, amateurs of eighteenth-century objects of art will recognize on the mantelpiece the "Venus" of Marin, now at the Louvre.

207, 208.

HA! LE JOLI PETIT CHIEN— LE PETIT CONSEIL

A pair after NICOLAS LAVREINCE, printed in colours

First states.
From Janinet's own portfolio of prints.
Bocher, Nos. 27 and 48.

THIS pair, of which no state before letters exists, is reckoned among Janinet's finest achievements, so perfect and deceptive is the imitation of Lavreince's technique.

Although Bocher quotes for the "Joli petit Chien" alone an earlier state, where "Lavrince pinx" is inscribed instead of "Lavreince," in the opinion of Mr. Danlos it would be impossible to find both prints better matched and in a more brilliant condition than on the two impressions before us.

Failing to see through the good-humoured demureness of two little groups, more spontaneously staged than was usual with the Swedish master, Bourcard in 1893 wrote of them as "insignificant, not up to the mark of either artists," and uttered warnings against the stability of the favour they enjoyed. Twenty years later the same author was bound to admit that the boom on a "nice wee dog" and its companion showed no sign of abating.

A small, oval, and reversed copy of the "Petit conseil" with slight alterations, signed "D.V." bears the title "S'il m'aime, il viendra"—as if to prompt the mistress's rejoinder to a maid who, out of personal experience, volunteered a word of advice. The seated figure in the same composition was reproduced by Janinet within a circle measuring two and a half inches in diameter, as a *simili* miniature for the lid of a box.

HA! LE JOLI PETIT CHIEN

By F. Janinet. After N. Lavreince

11A. LE JOLI PETIT CHIEN.

Ah, Dieu, mon cœur bat bien fort ! Je pense que le petit chien pourra bien être mort.

LE PETIT CONSEIL

By F. Janinet. After N. Lavreince

LE PETIT CONSEIL

209, 210.

LA JEUNE VESTALE—LA VÉNUS AUX COLOMBES

A pair after JEAN JACQUES FRANÇOIS LE BARBIER, printed in colours

First states.
From Janinet's own portfolio of prints.

DELICATE and transparent as colour prints, both compositions are connotative of the manner of LE BARBIER (1738-1826), a pupil of Pierre, who with a portrait of Dubois, the first of the French Guards to enter the Bastille, was hailed at the Salon of 1790 as the connecting link between Greuze and David. His subsequent and less sensational works were to show that, while adhering to certain mannerisms of the old school, he had by no means adopted the sternness of the new. Concessions to the latter, however, are suggested in this case by the sturdy hands given to a young Vestal and by Venus's apparent determination to make a fricassee of two doves, as discarded emblems of the past.

211.

LE REPAS DES MOISSONNEURS

After PIERRE ALEXANDRE WILLE, printed in colours in 1774

First state.

Coat of arms of Count de Baudouin, Brigadier in the King's army, and Captain of the French Guards.

THIS composition and a very different one, "la Femme à la tulipe," are looked upon as the two best works by the son of the "first burinist in "Europe."[1] No doubt P. A. WILLE (1748-1821) benefited by the renown and skill of his father, who reproduced some of his pictures, as Janinet did. He collaborated with no less a man than Eisen in producing the vignettes for du Rosoi's beautiful volume "les Sens." His lack of imagination over a *genre* subject, "la Nouvelle affligeante," engraved by Cathelin, became a standing studio joke. As the attitude of despair struck in it by a lady in full dress and feathers appeared scarcely comprehensible, he could find nothing more to the point than the insertion on the frame of a little ship going down at sea.

By keeping his wash drawings intentionally subdued young Wille made them more pleasing than his oil paintings. Janinet, who appreciated this characteristic quality of tone, has conveyed the transparent colours of "les Moissonneurs" on an aquatint which, after having been forgotten by collectors, profits now, according to Bourcard, by the rarefaction of genuine old colour prints, and is sought after. The impression before us was described in the catalogue of the Behague sale as a first state before the border. When engraved, the original picture belonged to Mr. Godefroid de Viltaneuze.

[1] The attempt to revive pure engraving of the classical style with an alloy of monotony was the merit of J. G. WILLE (1715-1808), a Hessian who, having lived in Paris from early youth, used to say he had come over in exchange for much French talent expatriated abroad. The perfection of his technique, probably derived from his first work as an engraver on silver and steel for a gunmaker, seldom afforded anything but metallic brilliance.

As a *protégé* of Eberts the banker and of Rigaud the painter, as a collaborator of Daullé, great engraver of portraits, as a member of the Royal Academy and Moreau's sponsor before that body, as the master of Massard, de Longueil, Tardieu, Bervic, Romanet, Dennel, Chevillet, Guttenburg, and de Mechel each of whom he befriended and never lost sight of, Wille was undoubtedly the only foreigner who exerted an influence over French burinists, and helped them to maintain the great traditions. If he introduced any new element into the school it was mostly in the regularity with which cross-hatching is interspersed with flick and dots, in the manifold lighter hatchings over a square pattern of thicker lines, in effects elicited from well distributed lights more so than from strong shadows.

Teutonic sentiment runs through his works without the "flowers of grace" of the country in which he lived seventy years. An unbending regularity, lacking artistic force, mars his best portraits, those of the Prince of Wales and of Marigny after Tocqué. Without rival in the literal interpretation of the small Dutch masters, witness his "Satin gown" after Terburg and the "Strolling musicians" after Dietrich, for which in Russia, Austria, and Germany there was great demand, he attracted the attention of foreign patrons of art visiting Paris and acted as their cicerone. He entertained friendly relations with Alderman Boydell, the English publisher, and with several English artists—Strange, Woollett, J. R. Smith, Ryland, and Vivares. Diderot professed a great admiration for him: "He engraves like a wise man, combining firmness with "mellowness." When Greuze in 1765 exhibited Wille's portrait, now in the André collection, the Encyclopaedist wrote: "This picture reflects roughness, harshness, and ardour, that force of unreasoning "conviction which attracts the best talent to his *atelier*. . . ."

A learned numismatist and iconographist, his advice was solicited on every side. A shrewd speculator in works of art, he sold his collection by auction in 1785, Basan having prepared the catalogue, which bore merely the initial W, and is now a signal rarity. He only kept his own drawings and prints. Unlettered states of the latter which he did not put into the trade but disposed of himself at long prices are so scarce that amateurs must be contented with ordinary impressions.

His memoirs, written with avowed snobbishness at eighty-eight years of age, show how incapable Wille was of profiting by unrivalled opportunities, how narrow his scope of interest and field of vision. Goncourt, however, who likes the man and his works, says that Wille's journal represents his existence as a glass house wherein happiness and common sense dwelt together.

His taste was not severe. Having first accepted French teaching and influence, as he built up his own position, his self-confidence returned, and when he became the acknowledged head of his profession his choice of subject suffered from it. The Revolution cast no shadow on him, except that he had to renounce his membership of a dozen Academies, as contrary to the principles of civic virtue. He went to see the Bastille on the morrow of its fall: "the interior made me shudder"; he went to see the corpse of "the "unfortunate Marat infamously murdered. . . ." Such were the personality and aptitudes of "the Voltaire "of engraving," neatly summed up by Lady Dilke.

If the collection in which several of his pupils are represented includes no print by him, the racial sentiments of a French collector who had fought in the war of 1870 may account for the exclusion. Mr. A. Christophle looked upon Wille as an exponent of German Kultur before the letter and preferred to ignore the weight of his plates.

212.

NINA, OU LA FOLLE PAR AMOUR

After CLAUDE JEAN BAPTISTE HOIN, printed in colours in 1787

First state.

TO the Mühlbacher sale in 1899, when the original of this composition appeared in a remarkable state of preservation, is due the revival of interest in the works of HOIN (1750-1817), the pupil of Greuze, a pastellist, a miniaturist, a landscape painter, an aquatint engraver, forgotten for nearly a century, now reinstated next to Lavreince and Taunay in that bright group of Baudouin's followers, whose *gouache* colours might have been borrowed from butterfly wings or petals of flowers. Hoin is seen at his best in the portraits of the Princess de Lamballe and of Dugazon; the Dijon Museum, of which he was curator, has several of his pretty drawings.

The reproduction of "Nina" by Janinet ranks among the triumphs of a graceful, deceptive, and pleasing art. Quoting its proofs as exceedingly rare and a standard specimen of colour printing, Portalis wrote: "Janinet was a practitioner "of the first order who did not mind putting his hand to the printer's share of the "work; nowhere more than on 'Nina' the virtuosity of his talent and the accuracy "of his process are apparent."

The engraving was first sold at a benefit performance for Madame Dugazon, then inserted in the weekly "Annals of Paris theatres," a sort of pre-revolutionary illustrated dramatic news, edited by Janinet. An uncompromising notice warned subscribers not to look for mere likenesses of faces on the portraits to be included in that magazine, but rather to rely on the truthful rendering of attitudes and expressions, "for the eye of a theatre-goer will more quickly recognize an actor "through his silhouette and deportment, than from features which are constantly "altered by optics, action, and make-up."

Louise Rosalie Lefevre (1753-1821), a *danseuse* at eighteen, a light singer and actress at twenty, married her teacher Dugazon, the comedian, with whom she soon parted company. He went mad, as did almost every other admirer of the lady's bewitching looks, willowy figure, and moving voice, even of her tip-tilted nose *à la Roxalana*. Her acting as Nina in the comic opera set to music by Delayrac took the audience by storm. No other theatrical success in Paris could be compared with it, save the "Mariage de Figaro" two years before.

NINA, OU LA FOLLE PAR AMOUR

By F. Janinet. After C. J. B. Hoin

Hoin's pearly *gouache* represented the Nina of Madame Dugazon seated on a garden bench, at the foot of stagey hills and cardboard trees, as she sang and sighed, "Alas, my beloved will not come back," a solo that drew tears from spectators, actors, musicians, and even, it was hinted, from creditors to whom the extravagant soprano would send complimentary tickets instead of payments. But in the midst of such triumphs, her supple and slender waist grew plump, then decidedly stout, and as thenceforth the beloved one could hardly be expected to appear at her call, the ideal Nina renounced her leading parts. Adopting matronly *rôles*, she again proved so remarkable that up to this day in theatrical parlance the important mothers and aunts of a play are described as "Dugazons."

In 1792, having made no secret of her devotion to Queen Marie Antoinette, she had to leave the stage, until under the Directoire her professional experience was called into requisition by the board of both Comic Opera Companies, of which she was appointed a trustee.

Her obituary in the "Gazette de France" contained the following sentence: "If it be true that, delightful as she was as an actress, Louise Rosalie in private "life lacked wit and taste, that her conversation was ordinary and void, we should "nevertheless have knelt down before her talent which we record now as a prodigy "of heavenly inspiration."

213.

LES NOURRICES

Engraved in 1784 after FRANÇOIS BOUCHER

OF minor importance among the works of Janinet, but presenting a striking contrast to his reproductions of *gouaches*, this print is mentioned by de Goncourt as an accurate interpretation of Boucher's sketchiness. Portalis writes: "Worthy of "a collector because of its rarity and as showing what Janinet could do in the way "of imitating a sepia drawing: his treatment is broader than that of Demarteau."

Of a series of rustic subjects commissioned by Mr. de Tessin and never finished by Boucher, "les Nourrices" is the only one engraved.

214.

L'OISEAU PRIVÉ

After LOUIS-LÉOPOLD BOILLY, printed in colours

Only state.
From Janinet's own portfolio of prints.

ALTHOUGH no lettered impression of it is known, the attribution of this rare plate to Janinet is amply supported by the provenance from the artist's portfolio discovered in 1878 at Haguenau. Conclusive evidence about the painter, however, has only lately been obtained; the hesitation of connoisseurs being accounted for by the fact that "tame birds" were a favourite theme in eighteenth-century art, that Bonnet engraved one after Huet and Pilon another after Chevaux, while Debucourt inaugurated his second manner with a composition under the same title (No. 98). Oddly enough, the character of the scene and its figures, the porcelanous appearance of Janinet's interpretation, do not seem to have suggested to anybody the frolicsome Master of "la douce Résistance" and "Que n'y est-il encore" (Nos. 39 and 41).

On the authority of Portalis, who in his essay on colour prints referred to it as "after Lagrénée, unquestionably by Janinet, though unsigned, in fact one of his "best," Bourcard in 1893 had entered "l'Oiseau privé" unreservedly under the heading of Lagrénée. And yet the original was within easy reach of critics in the heart of Paris, among a portion of the Wallace Collection inherited by Sir John Scott. Mr. A. Danlos having had occasion to examine the little picture, identified it as a Boilly and once for all rectified the attribution. Whereupon Bourcard in 1912 altered his previous statement as follows: "Beyond doubt by Boilly and in "the Wallace collection"; a misleading location the latter, which suggests Hertford House in Manchester Square instead of specifying Lord Hertford's former residence in the Rue Lafitte, emptied of its treasures by Lady Sackville in 1913.

Having rashly stated that "there are no colour prints before letters," Bourcard catches hold of this very engraving to quote a first exception to his axiom.

Yet another "Oiseau privé" by Boilly in the Mühlbacher collection had no relation whatever with this.

215.

PORTRAIT D'UNE JEUNE PRINCESSE

Proof printed in colours

Only state.
From Janinet's own portfolio of prints.

THERE can be no doubt that this exquisite portrait, intended as a *simili* miniature to be set under glass, was engraved by Janinet, since a few impressions of it have been found among the artist's picked selection of his own works. Whether the original was by Lavreince or by Janinet himself has not been ascertained, any more than the identity of the sitter, rather arbitrarily designated in collectors' parlance as the "Little Wilhelmina." Because "Frider" is inscribed on a blue ribbon among the flowers of the young woman's basket, and as the medallion held in her left hand presents a vague resemblance to a picture of Frederic Wilhelm III of Prussia, amateur iconographists have decided that this must be the likeness of his daughter, Frederica Wilhelmina, wife of William, first King of the Netherlands (1772-1843) and daughter-in-law as well as niece of the Princess of Orange-Nassau already mentioned by us in connection with a print by Descourtis. The identification lacks the support of the "Chalcographia Hagiana," where no trace is found of such a portrait.

Another supposition that we have here a youthful image of Louise of Prussia (1776-1810), mother of Frederica Wilhelmina, is neither borne out by that Queen's great reputation for beauty to which the miniature would scarcely do justice, nor by the evident discrepancy of age between the presumed Frederic Wilhelm of the medallion and the lady represented.

Beraldi describes the "charming, unsigned round portrait in 18mo of a Princess" as most finely executed, in the style of Janinet. Bourcard calls it superlatively rare, inserts a dot of interrogation after the name of "Frederica Sophia Wilhelmina of "Prussia" and adds "*attributed* to Janinet."

PORTRAIT D'UNE JEUNE PRINCESSE

By F. Janinet

216.

PROJET D'UN MONUMENT À ÉRIGER POUR LE ROI

After MOREAU LE JEUNE, printed in colours in 1790

First state.
Bocher, No. 269.

IN the stormy days of 1790 de Varenne, honorary Usher to the National Assembly, in a platonic effort to conciliate the animosity against the monarchy with the traditional devotion to the memory of Henry IV, proposed the erection of a monument on which the first Bourbon king would be grouped with his descendant, who was running every chance of being the last of the dynasty on the throne. Together with Janinet he submitted Moreau's delineation of his project to Louis XVI, who remarked with unfailing simplicity: "You wish us to be in good "company." The scheme went no further, and neither draughtsman nor engraver was ever paid for his work, merely because de Varenne had relied on the city of Paris to defray an expense he could not personally afford.

In money matters Moreau was exacting. There is on record a badly spelt letter of his, in which he complains to the President of the Assembly of being put off with vague excuses: "at a time when the fine arts market is tight and gold scarce. All "things come to an end, so does patience with a Royal Academician who, unless "he receives within one week four hundred livres, will garnish the salary of an "unreliable Usher until the stipulated price for the sketch of a monument to "His Majesty be fully paid. Let Mr. Janinet do as he pleases."

The weak conceptions of a group where a good-humoured Louis XVI seems to avow his utter incompetence to Henry IV was wholly due to de Varenne. Moreau had done his best to improve upon it with the introduction of three chubby genii, personating Agriculture, Commerce, and the Fine Arts, and by enlivening the scene with the typical by-play of his somewhat elongated little figures. The task must have reminded him of the architectural drawings which had early revealed his gifts in the workshop of Lebas.

On the pedestal a bas-relief shows "the three orders of the State presenting "to the King the Constitution as the mainstay of the Crown and the foundation "of the common weal. On one side a woman holds the Roman fasces, a symbol "of concord; on the other Hercules represents strength," as explained in a long-

winded legend under the second state of the print. To Henry IV, who is made to remark: "My son, on the people's happiness that of the King depends," Louis XVI is supposed to answer: "My people and I are but one."

The original drawing, once in the Mahérault collection—the only water-colour by Moreau that was ever engraved—bears a shorter inscription in a somewhat different spirit: "Project of a monument to be erected for the King and our Lords "of the National Assembly. The genius of Commerce presents to the King a "medallion of Mr. Necker, instead of the mirror of truth." The sentences exchanged between Henry IV and Louis XVI are omitted.

Apparently the draughtsman who was merely to write *delineavit* after his signature and the Usher who added *invenit* to his own name disagreed as to the object to be held by a Genius before the King. Eventually the allegiance of de Varenne had the best of the liberal intentions of Moreau, and on the print the mirror of truth replaced the portrait of a Finance Minister who had urged the summoning of the Estates General.[1] It looks as if the artist, by way of harping on his point, had added the wording under the drawing after the issue of the print.

"I^er^ Etat" is written by hand on the rare proof before us, probably a presentation copy. At the back are the autograph signatures of de Varenne and of Janinet, whose largest work this was. His successful rendering of the marble and bronzes represented by Moreau induced him to decorate in the same fashion a set of illustrations of Liberty, Equality, and sundry other civic ideals, but the result proved to be too gaudy to take rank next to his first experiment.

After describing this singularly heavy project as a pathetic intention cruelly belied by events, Portalis finds recreation in the neat and picturesque bystanders of 1790 scattered round the multi-coloured base of the monument, wearing coppered indigo coats and barouche bonnets, an *abbé* among them who looks at the green bronze statues through an eyeglass.

The print was for sale "at the Post Office of the National Assembly next to "the Feuillants garden and at Janinet's, rue Hautefeuille 5."

[1] In 1781 Moreau had retouched the frontispiece of a report submitted to the King by Necker, then Director-General of Finances.

OFFRANDE À L'AMOUR

By F. Janinet. After J. J. Lagrenée

217.

OFFRANDE À L'AMOUR

After JEAN-JACQUES LAGRENÉE, printed in colours

First state.
From Janinet's own portfolio of prints.

A PUPIL of his father, who was a capital draughtsman and an impersonal artist, LAGRENÉE Junior (1740-1821) accompanied him to Russia, and made for himself a speciality of flower painting on glass, on enamel, and even on marble. Having returned to Paris, he taught perspective at the Academy, of which he became a member, and undertook to reform the shapes and decorations of Sèvres china-ware along classical lines, in advance of the Empire style. Having launched suddenly beyond the limitations of his talent, he filled a compartment of the ceiling of the Galerie d'Apollon at the Louvre with an allegory of Winter. The imperfect arrangement, hard touch, and sour colouring of his large compositions are most unlike the fluent execution and fresh hues of the small pictures for which the name of French Albani, conferred at one time upon his father, was revived in his favour.

Janinet's supple interpretation tempers on the print before us the conventional turn of the original and supports a comparison to the "Anacreon" of Carracci's school. Nothing could be more Albanesque than the mellow distance whence two women rush forward to join in the worship of Love, at whose feet lay a broken bow and a quiver.

Bourcard dwells on the rarity of this "very graceful" plate.

218.

LES TROIS GRÂCES

After GIOVANNI ANTONIO PELLEGRINI, printed in colours

First state.

ACCORDING to Mariette, G. A. PELLEGRINI (1674-1741) not il Pellegrino, a Michelangiolesque artist of the Renaissance, and not an old Master, as Bourcard calls him with a pathetic anachronism, was a practitioner who would undertake to fill a vast ceiling with figures, horses, and trappings in the manner of Verrio and Laguerre as readily as he might agree to paint a small easel piece. Blind to the necessity of consulting nature both for drawing and for colour, his tangible success in England, Austria, and Poland was due to lack of competition rather than to merit. However, his "Oath of Hamlet's mother," now in Genoa, shows that he could rise above the conventions and limitations of the pictures of his day.

Pellegrini was neither the first nor the last to take liberties with the personification of the Graces.[1] After Greek inventiveness had had full play with their pedigree and names, already in the second century A.D. Pausanias, the author of "Periegesis," wondered why sculptors should undrape these lovely creatures whom archaic art had shown wearing draperies. The answer would have been that before the Christian conception of charity, on which rests the fabric of modern society, absorbed the name of Charites, that name, connoting the idea of favours received or bestowed, was given to the three sisters who patronized gratitude. Their nudity signifies accordingly the obligation of sincerity towards our fellow creatures without any mental reservation; they are swift and young because kind deeds should never be delayed nor their memory allowed to grow old; they hold each other by the hand to suggest the linking together of mankind by mutual services; they are maidens because the excitements of passion and the encumbrances of married life are incompatible with beneficence.

Between the sturdy and plump forms displayed by Pellegrini's models and their glazed, brick-like complexions, for which Janinet's process is probably responsible on the print, only the intertwined pose of these early eighteenth-century Graces adheres to the classical conception of Euphrosyne, Aglaia, and Thalia—joyfulness, brightness, and beauty—the daughters of Zeus and Hera, the companions of Aphrodite and of Hermes, the playmates of Eros, one of whom should hold a

LES TROIS GRÂCES

By F. Janinet. After G. A. Pellegrini

rose, another a dice, the third a sprig of myrtle, and each should smile benignly. How far removed are Pellegrini's decadent canons from the purity of forms and the harmoniously undulating lines on the Greek marble at Siena from which Raphael drew his inspiration for the small and exquisite picture now at Chantilly, a composition thoroughly Hellenic in spirit and yet of Italian suavity. Strange to say, not more than three or four antique groups of the Graces have come to light, although the subject must have been a popular one at Athens and in Rome. To Raphael's miniature can be traced the innumerable interpretations of the same theme in painting and in sculpture, from Titian and Germain Pilon to Canova. Rubens' presentment of the sister goddesses stands apart as giving them a Flemish exuberance of animal life which apparently impressed Pellegrini and Janinet more forcibly than the ideal physique sanctioned by myth.

On the merit of this engraving opinions differ, chiefly on account of the flesh tints which, however, are rosier and more pleasing on the rare early state, before a garland was stretched across the limbs of the three young divinities. It is interesting to note that, although several plates were used in the process, not more than one register mark is discernible here. Only when Mr. de Novion issues his long-promised catalogue of Janinet's works shall we know whether the Graces belong to his experimental period, or coincide with his mastery of colour printing between 1777 and 1791.

The impression to which we refer came from the Halsey collection.

[1] The last to do so, ere genuine art expired with the eighteenth century, was a greater artist than Pellegrini, Sir Joshua Reynolds. On one of those allegorical "machines" to which he was partial, he represented the daughters of Sir W. Montgomery as the Graces sacrificing to Hymen. The group is more attractive on the mezzotint by Thomas Watson than on the huge and faded canvas now at the National Gallery, of which Viardot wrote: "Three great ladies, wise, prudish, and proper, dressed up to their necks, though judging by their occupation they are about to renounce the Graces' virginal calling."

219.

LA TOILETTE DE VÉNUS

After FRANÇOIS BOUCHER, printed in colours in 1783

Second state.
Coat of arms of Countess de Coislin, *née* de Mailly.

A PORTRAIT or not a portrait? Certainly Boucher had lent to his Venus the features of Pompadour, but as the allegory was too suggestive to be countenanced by the Marquise other than in the abstract, the picture, instead of taking rank among the acknowledged likenesses of the King's mistress, was reckoned as a decorative panel, one of several panels of mythological character on which the painter ignored the severity of the academic nude, and of undraped goddesses made undressed women. By buying it for his gallery at Ménars, Marigny seems to have given expression to the inmost gratification of his sister.

There were two different versions of the same subject. The original of Janinet's print fetched 587 livres at the Marigny sale in 1782. Six years later it turned up again at the sale of Mr. de Boullogne, the financier. In the second half of the nineteenth century it belonged to Count de la Beraudière, whose collection was disposed of by auction in 1885. It has gone since then to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, when bound for the United States. The other "Toilette," engraved by Duflos, was sold for 25,000 francs at the first San Donato sale in 1870.

Both compositions were marred by Boucher's indulgence in too many accessories and hangings, in a surfeit of rococo curves and vagaries which would extend from the undulating limbs of a Louis XV Venus to the twisted shape of a couch as extravagantly projecting and receding—*chantournée*—as any piece of furniture about to be discarded in favour of the sedate outlines of the incoming Louis XVI style, under the influence of Cochin, Soufflot, and of Pompadour herself.

Having dwelt rather disparagingly upon the "Trois Grâces" (No. 218) Portalis and Beraldi quote this print as a distinct set off: "How much more graceful the "'Toilette de Vénus' on which Janinet has reproduced the opalescent colouring, "the pearly rose of his model."

On a rare third state the topmost Cupid has been burnished out to the detriment of the balance of the composition and of the even finish of the plate.

The impression before us came from the Halsey collection.

LA TOILETTE DE VÉNUS

By F. Janinet. After F. Boucher

LA TOILETTE DE VENUS

Dédiée à Madame la Comtesse de Coaslin

Mailly

Par ses très humbles et très obéissant serviteur Fumeus

220, 221.

VÉNUS EN RÉFLECTION—
VÉNUS DÉSARMANT L'AMOUR

After JACQUES CHARLIER, printed in colours

First state.

IT was for modern critics to take CHARLIER (17 ? -17 ?) at his worth, first as a fairly good miniaturist, not so much of portraits as of fancy and mythological subjects, secondly as the painter who produced the most marketable Boucher pictures, a designation which did not necessarily mean a painting by Boucher.

When one bears in mind that the limner in ordinary to Louis XV and Pompadour claimed to have disposed of close upon 1,000 canvases of his own composition, not counting nearly 10,000 drawings in which he was the first to trade and for which he established a regular workshop, while finding time to superintend the factory of Beauvais tapestry, allowances should be made for some of his contemporaries who mixed up apprentices and master. Only a captious posterity has discerned through a considerable share of works long attributed to Boucher the hand of more or less anonymous pupils, of Madame Boucher amongst them and of Charlier, whose paintings in miniature—*tableaux en miniature*—though not to be reckoned "among the most remarkable of the French school" as stated in Benezit's dictionary, had a personal accent. At a time when the average amateur valued nicety and refinement more than a vigorous modelling and general effects, the success of Charlier was due, rather than to any original gift, to his knack of contracting within a diminutive space a comparatively important composition. Otherwise he lacked distinction. The arrangement was involved, the search after sinuous lines too obvious, the draperies were over-folded, the attitudes of his sprawling goddesses almost indiscreet, his Cupids too stolid to frolic on clouds. But, thanks to a palette of rose petals soaked in milk, of pearly blues, silvery greens, and sour yellows, this understudy of Boucher benefits by Bourcard's trite reference to the sauce and the fish.

Judging by the catalogue of Count de Caylus's sale in 1773 the great *cognoscente* had patronized Charlier, by whom he possessed no less than ten pictures, "Vénus désarmant l'Amour" amongst them, which fetched 280 livres.

On the other hand, not more than two Charlier miniatures turned up at one of the most remarkable auctions of the time, that of the Prince de Conti in 1777. Two years later, when the artist himself offered for sale ninety of his own paintings, he placed a reserve on the works he considered important, letting only the minor ones go. The highest bid obtained, 320 livres, was for "Venus laying Cupid on a bed of roses." Under the first Empire his reputation had faded away. At the La Mésangère sale in 1831 a lot of six so-called portraits, including his "Jupiter and Leda," fetched 50 francs. In 1857 a few Charlier miniatures were offered at the auction of modern pictures, ivories, Murano ware, and other curios, "the property of "Mr. Richard W," no less a seller than the then Mr. Richard Wallace, half-brother of Lord Hertford. The annals of the Hôtel Drouot at the time did not mention the result of the Charlier lot, but it is not unfair to suppose that a portion of it, being left with the owner, found its way permanently to the glass cases of Hertford House, not far from the "Rising" and "Setting of the Sun," two triumphal canvases by Boucher, and near a few showy performances of his best pupil.

The prints before us, once in the Halsey collection, are two of a set of four, the others being "le Sommeil d'Ariane" and "l'Amour rendant hommage à sa Mère," the latter after Boucher.

VÉNUS EN RÉFLECTION

By F. Janinet. After J. Charlier

VÉNUS DÉSARMANT L'AMOUR

By F. Janinet. After J. Charlier

222.

MODÈLES DE COIFFURES

Printed in colours

Unique impression.

FRENCH fashion-plates, which under the auspices of Queen Marie Antoinette came to be issued monthly as illustrations to the "Grande Galerie" and the "Galerie des Modes," were never printed in colours, on account of the labour and the expense. Most of them, signed Watteau fils, Leclerc, Desrais, Martin, specialists in that line, appeared in black-and-white, an extra charge being made to subscribers for copies carefully hand-coloured by Mme. Lebeau. Janinet alone applied his genuine process to a short-lived issue of portrait busts—portraits merely in name—intended as models of head-dresses, one on each plate. The impression before us, from the L.D. sale of 30 March 1889, is the only one known where the artist printed five small medallions on the same sheet, either as trial proofs of a new set of coiffures, or else as *simili* miniatures to be cut close and mounted on the lids of fancy boxes; the diminutive size of the head in the centre coming in support of this supposition.

The margins show numerous traces of burin.

223.

LES HEURES DU JOUR

Four circular medallions after NICOLAS LAVREINCE, printed in colours on one sheet

The only complete impression known.

THE classical title conferred upon this unique set is more arbitrary than the attribution to Lavreince and Janinet; the style of one artist and his drawing, the process and delicate colouring of the other, point to their delightful collaboration and justify the assumption. But because morning, noon, afternoon, and evening are the established divisions of the day, it does not follow that the main stages in the flight of time should be symbolized by four damsels performing no particular work appropriate to any special hour, nor dressed for any more definite functions than those of holding a parasol, flirting with a young man, playing the guitar, or, most absorbing of all, sitting before a looking-glass. Shape, dimension, and treatment, while discarding the supposition that we have here a quadruple fashion-plate, show that these dainty prints, as well as the models of head-dresses previously described, were to be passed off as miniatures under glass on *étuis* and snuff-boxes. A few "Consolations de l'absence" and "Heureux moments" (Nos. 248, 254) after Lavreince, reduced in size, were turned to such purpose with success, at no trifling cost, as the execution of ornamental knick-knacks would by no means be entrusted to mere journeymen.

Without specifying any particular composition, Portalis and Beraldi state that Janinet reproduced a number of small circular *galant* subjects "very interesting "and rare." Bocher makes no reference to them among the works of Lavreince; neither does Bourcard. Two medallions from the same quartette of so-called "Heures du jour," cut close and separately mounted as drawings, turned up at the Henrotte sale in 1913. With that partial exception, no other impression of them is known. According to Mr. Danlos, the set may have been limited to two or three proofs; the purpose for which they were intended would not admit of any more.

ÉTIENNE JEAURAT

224.

L'EXEMPLE DES MÈRES

Engraved by FRANÇOIS LUCAS

Second state.
Coat of arms of Mr. Damery.

ÉTIENNE JEAURAT (1690-1789), the brother of Edmé Jeaurat, the engraver, and a pupil of Watteau's friend, Wleughels, was the best contemporary imitator of Chardin's interior scenes, into which Diderot said he felt bound to penetrate, whereas he merely stumbled against those of his followers. Although Jeaurat lacked the power of expression of his great model, his grouping was happy, the colour agreeable, and his pictures, of which the Louvre does not possess a single specimen, are curious illustrations of street scenes and domestic life under Louis XV. Whatever may have been his success at the time, it is sufficient to look at the cumbrous attire of the child of an "Exemplary mother" to realize that nowadays any comparison with Chardin would be overwhelming.

Of LUCAS no biography is given by Portalis and Beraldi. He is mentioned merely as the burinist to whom are due several interpretations of Terburg and Jordaens as well as of the "Exemple." In enumerating the forty-five engraved works of Jeaurat, Bourcard selects this as the rarest.

NICOLAS RENÉ JOLLAIN

225, 226.

LE BAIN—LA TOILETTE

A pair engraved by Louis Marin Bonnet, printed in colours

First state.

BENEZIT'S dictionary says of JOLLAIN (1732-?), a pupil of Pierre, that the historical, mythological, religious, and *genre* subjects due to his fertile brush fill an honourable place in French art and deserve to be better known. With the exception, however, of the pair before us and a rather indifferent "Nymphe Erigone," the work of this painter does not seem to have found favour with engravers.

While Bonnet had made for himself a speciality of what he termed the crayon manner, the *atelier* annexed to his business as print dealer was by no means limited to that process. Portalis quotes as an evidence the "Toilette" and the "Bain," where stipple is used in the treatment of the flesh.

In 1893, Bourcard had expressed little consideration for both plates; but in 1912 he modified his judgement by stating that before the dearth of eighteenth-century colour prints, it is useless to be over-exacting. No two such brilliant impressions of the early state before the drapery have appeared at sales in recent years.

Although the subjects were anything but new at the time, the slipper bath introduced by Jollain in one scene is a peculiar fixture to which neither Baudouin nor Lavreince nor Freudenberger had recourse; just as in their pictures of a lady's toilet it never occurred to them to treat a flowery hat as the preliminary article of apparel.

LE BAIN

By L. M. Bonnet. After N. R. Jollain

LA TOILETTE

By L. M. Bonnet. After N. R. Jollain

JOS. KRANTZINGER

227.

LA REINE MARIE ANTOINETTE

Engraved and printed in colours by Louis Marin Bonnet

Lettered state.

OWING to the inaccurate orthography of his name under some of the prints which reproduce his pictures, Jos. KRANTZINGER (1750-1829), a native of Salzburg, has often been mixed with Kreutzinger and with Hautzinger, who like himself and in the same years were limners-in-ordinary to the Austrian Imperial family. Having been trained at the Academy of drawing in Vienna, he went to Paris and like all German artists sought the support of Wille, whose minute diary contains the following entry, dated 24 January 1769: "A Viennese painter "Greuzinger [*sic*] has called with an introduction from Schmuzer, a former pupil "of mine."

The chief resource of young artists was then the administration of the "Menus Plaisirs" or Royal Entertainments—including funerals—among whose minor duties, somehow, was that of providing copies of official portraits for distribution throughout the kingdom or for presentation abroad. On the recommendation of the Austrian ambassador, Count de Mercy Argenteau, the "Menus," as that Board was called for short, commissioned Krantzinger to reproduce from the pastels just painted by Ducreux the girlish features of the fourteen-year-old Archduchess, the prospective bride of the Dauphin.

With reference to Ducreux's work in Vienna there exists a diplomatic correspondence from which we gather that three were the portraits he did of Marie Antoinette. The first failed to please the Court and was neither copied nor engraved; as for the other two, Mercy Argenteau wrote to the Empress Maria Theresa that as soon as they were delivered at Versailles, Louis XV had them placed in his apartments.[1] For want of corresponding entries in the inventories of the Palace after 1769, the only reference to one of them, not to both, occurs in a letter from Pierre, the Director of the Academy, to Marigny, where he mentions "a poor "pastel of the Dauphiness, no longer a good likeness, in the King's rooms."

As engravers had no access to paintings in His Majesty's private apartments, they must have worked in this case after copies of the portraits taken in Vienna;

witness the inscription on the little plate by Bonnet: "Taken from Krantzinger's "pastel hung in the rooms of Mesdames, the daughters of Louis XV." And as, on the other hand, no picture of Marie Antoinette by Ducreux appears to be now in existence, it is impossible to control *prima facie* the accuracy of Pierre's depreciative remarks or to form an exact idea of the salient traits of two originals which may have presented some differences not only in the head-dress and gown, but also to some extent in the countenance and expression. The fact is that through the numerous prints of the Dauphiness issued on the occasion of her marriage in 1770 it is easy to recognize two standard types principally characterized by an engraving due to Le Vasseur and by another due to Croisey, a simpler and apparently a more genuine likeness, each reproducing one of the portraits by Ducreux. To Bonnet's small oval Messrs. Vuaflart and Bourin make the following reference: "extremely "rare. There exist two reversed impressions of it, printed with different colours; "the type coincides with that reproduced by Le Vasseur; the dress differs."

That the pastel interpreted by Bonnet was a copy is evidenced by the fact that young Krantzinger received payment for it when Marie Antoinette, being still in Vienna, could not possibly sit to him, and that this payment on behalf of Mesdames, as shown on the accounts of the "Menus" now at the National Archives, amounted to the sum of 288 livres, a paltry requital even in those days for an original picture, however obscure the artist.

While adhering to a type or rather to one of two types, both apparently traceable to Ducreux, Bonnet's medallion lacks the Hapsburg characteristics on the forehead, eyes, and lips of the Archduchess, whom it represents as if well out of her teens—*l'âge ingrat*—probably because with courtly deference the French painter in Vienna and Krantzinger after him at Versailles, besides lavishing all the graces on a girl of fourteen, had lent her the figure and the set airs of a young lady of twenty. Such iconographic inaccuracies would hardly disturb Démocède, the average print collector, with whom rarity, according to La Bruyère, is the paramount attraction.[2]

Be that as it may, Bonnet's diminutive plate in colours is a remarkable curio. Mr. H. Beraldi does not possess it: no more did Mr. Christophle, the impression before us having been secured in 1917 at the Halsey sale. Even Lord Ronald Gower had to refer to the Bibliothèque Nationale for a description of it in his exhaustive catalogue of the Queen's engraved portraits, although his own collection of them—now in the J. Pierpont Morgan Library—was the largest formed at a time when love and money combined could ferret out almost any print.

[1] In an indirect way, however, one of Ducreux's portraits was engraved, for an ultra-rare mezzotint by Gautier-Dagoty represents Louis XV surrounded by his household in the act of showing to the young Dauphin a picture of his bride, which seems to correspond to the Le Vasseur iconographic type.

[2] This character could not be intended as a skit on DE MAROLLES (1600-1681), as alleged by some commentators of La Bruyère. The Abbé, who first amassed 264 portfolios of prints, bought in 1667 by

Colbert for the King's Library, and who in 1672 had already put together 237 more folio volumes of them, to which up to his last day he made constant additions, this one-eyed Abbé, a poor man of letters but the most enlightened classifier ever known, had no gap in his collection nor any cause for regret. If he did not possess everything, he was always on the eve of securing what he lacked, only praying God for time to complete his searches and catalogues, though knowing full well that no collection can ever be complete: "once possessed by this hobby it is impossible to get rid of it: its admirable variety ever offers more "charms."

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